

THE LANCET



Commission on Syria

Health in Conflict

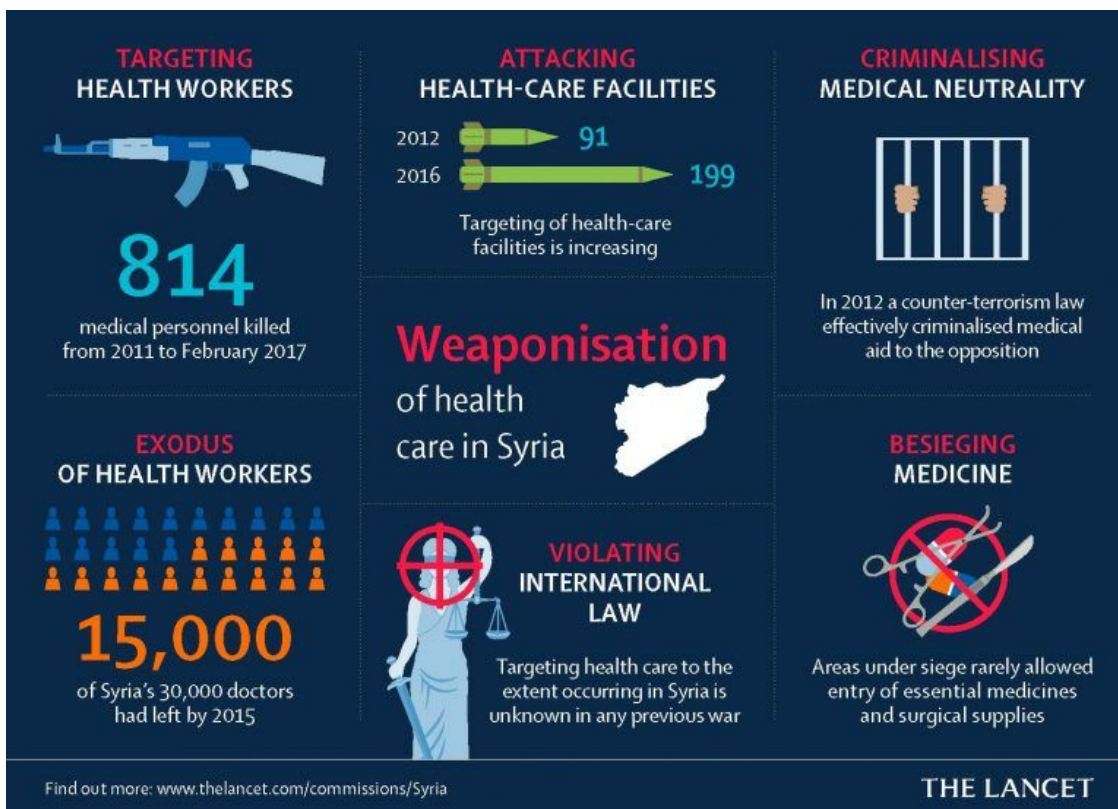


*The Lancet-AUB Commission on Syria Electronic Newsletter - Issue 2
February - March 2017*

Spotlight

Health workers and the 'weaponisation' of health care in Syria

On 14 March 2017, *The Lancet-AUB Commission on Syria: Health in Conflict* published its first major output, a Health Policy paper in *The Lancet* focusing on the plight of health workers in Syria. The paper explored the concept of 'weaponisation' of health care, a multi-dimensional phenomenon which includes attacking health-care facilities, targeting health workers, criminalizing medical neutrality, besieging medicine, and blocking population access to health care. *The Lancet* has developed an infographic to capture the dimensions of 'weaponization' (see below). Read the [Full Text](#).



The media reacts

The paper on the 'weaponisation' of health care in Syria had extensive coverage internationally. Pieces in the BBC News, Agence France-Presse (AFP), Reuters, the Guardian, and regionally in the Daily Star, the Middle East Eye, and Syria Deeply have helped disseminate the paper's findings and key messages. See full media coverage [here](#).



The Lancet on the sixth anniversary of the Syrian conflict

On 14 March 2017, *The Lancet* marked the sixth anniversary of the protracted Syrian conflict with the launch of an [interim webpage](#) that includes, in addition to the aforementioned paper and infographic, an Editorial, a Comment, related publications in *The Lancet* over the past six years, and [The Lancet Call for Papers](#) on "Health and the Syria Conflict".

The Lancet Editorial " *Syria suffers as the world watches*" laments the failings of the global community and international governance with respect to the Syrian crisis. It calls for greater attention to health in conflict. "Journals too have been guilty of turning away from the conflict to focus on more immediate wins," Editorial explains. The WHO-authored Comment, " *One attack on a health worker is one too many*" further raises concern regarding attacks on health-care workers and health-care settings and urges concrete measures to prevent such attacks. Read the full text of the [Editorial](#) and the [Comment](#).

In focus: Commission Research

The Commission holds its first research meeting at AUB

The **Research and Documentation Team (RDT)**, the Commission's core research arm, held its first meeting on 25-26 February 2017 at the Faculty of Health Sciences, American University of Beirut. The meeting discussed the theory and practice of research in/on conflict, reviewed regional and international experiences of such research, agreed on the operational approach of the RDT, and discussed the research and data needs of the Commission's six Thematic Groups.

Participants enjoyed vibrant discussions following presentations from AUB's Secretariat and [Center for Systematic Reviews on Health Policy and Systems Research \(SPARK\)](#), [Syrian Center for Policy Research \(Syria\)](#), [FXB Center for Health and Human Rights \(Harvard University, USA\)](#) and [Center for Research on Epidemiology of Disasters \(Université Catholique du Louvain, Belgium\)](#). This meeting formally kicked off the Commission's research work.



Commission Research Work

The Commission conducts and synthesizes research around six themes related to the Syrian crisis, namely a) the Syrian crisis within the health and global context; b) Health inside Syria; c) refugees and host communities; d) health systems and rebuilding; e) international response to the crisis; and f) the future, policy and practice implications. See [thematic groups](#) for more details on this.

Commission in International Dialogue

The last week of March 2017 was a busy time for the Commission. We participated in several

important events of core interest to the work of the Commission.



Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) Meeting: 'Assessing International Responses to the Syria Conflict'

**Brussels, Belgium
27 March 2017**

The meeting was organised by the **European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)**, with representatives from 44 international non-governmental organisations. As the European Union is the largest provider of humanitarian aid to Syria, the meeting reconfirmed commitments to health, education, the right to asylum and protection. The meeting took place ahead of an important **Brussels conference** organized by the Council of the European Union on the 5th of April 2017, entitled "Supporting the future of Syria and the region".



Expert Consultation on "The Lancet-AUB Commission on Syria: Health in Conflict"

Focus: Syrian Refugees in Germany

**Bielefeld, Germany
28 March 2017**

This Consultation was organised and hosted by the School of Public Health at the University of Bielefeld, with experts and specialists in refugee studies. The meeting was chaired by Professor Alexander Krämer. Leading German researchers reviewed the status of Syrian refugees in Germany and presented their research work on the refugee crisis, including assessments of health and integration. The Consultation included a discussion of ideas for *The Lancet Call for Papers* on "Health and the Syria Conflict". Participants agreed to continue discussion on collaboration.



"Strengthening Human Resources for Health: Integration of Refugees into Host Community Health Systems"

**Marseille, France
30-31 March 2017**

Co-organized by the World Bank, OECD and the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), this **workshop** discussed the integration of Syrian refugee health-care workers in host countries with a focus on **OECD countries**. The workshop focused on sharing knowledge and reviewed innovative strategies around three issues: a) Identifying training needs; b) Identifying challenges related to health workforce participation; and c) Identifying the potential of pre- and in-service training as well as bridging programmes to support the integration of Syrian and other refugee health-care workers into the workforce.

To view all the Commission's E-newsletters, click [here](#).