

Top news:

- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs launched the updated COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan with financing requirements over a period of nine months (April-December 2020) are estimated to be US\$2.012 billion.
- The EU is to put forward proposals for a mechanism to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic at the next meeting of the WHO.
- EU Parliament's Committee on International Trade shares draft opinion on shortage of medicines; urging the Commission and the Member States to work with the WHO and WTO, on establishing an international framework that can prevent the breakdown of supply chains and limit resort to protectionist measures during health crises.
- Latest version of the EU draft COVID-19 resolution includes a proposal to investigate the source of the virus and how it was introduced to the human population, effectively involving China.
- During a WHO AFRO media briefing, Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa, expressed concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on the ability of African countries to progress towards UHC & COVID-19 likely to peak in four to six weeks if nothing is done.
- Pfizer tags 3 U.S. and Belgian manufacturing sites for possible COVID-19 vaccine launch.

WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

- **Politico Pro:** [WHO Assembly to meet virtually over two days to address pandemic response.](#) The adoption of the assembly's COVID-19 response is the only substantive item on the provisional agenda for the 73rd WHA. The EU-sponsored resolution is largely in line with an earlier draft. However, this latest version includes a proposal to investigate the source of the virus and how it was introduced to the human population, effectively involving China. The idea has been championed by EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who has publicly stated her support for an investigation. EU resolution draft as of May 6 [here](#).

GLOBAL RESPONSE

- **The Guardian:** [EU to propose process for how WHO can learn from COVID-19 outbreak.](#) The proposal will however stop short of calls from the US and Australia for a full international inquiry. Brussels is trying to steer a course between the US and China in the blame game between the superpowers.
- **UN:** [Launch the updated #COVID19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan.](#) This COVID-19 [Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (HRP) includes a humanitarian needs analysis, strategic priorities, response approach, coordination mechanisms and monitoring framework, and financial requirements. The financing requirements for the Global HRP from April-December 2020 are estimated at US\$2.012 billion.

ACCESS, PRICING & IP

- **GreenWorld:** [A patented Covid-19 vaccine could price out millions.](#) The Costa Rica proposal is "not effective and not necessary", Richard Wilder, general legal counsel of CEPI. Wilder argues that pharmaceutical companies, biotech firms and academic labs will refuse to share their vaccine technologies and scientific processes and there is "simply no time now" to do anything different than usual. This then becomes a key question of the hour: is the need for a Covid-19 vaccine, its manufacture and its distribution now so great

that “business as usual”, as Ellen ‘t Hoen puts it, is a non-starter? And will governments require patent holders to share?

- **Reuters:** [Will Gilead price its coronavirus drug for public good or company profit?](#) The article states Gilead faces a new dilemma in deciding how much it should profit from the only treatment so far proven to help patients infected with the novel coronavirus.

SUPPLY CHAIN

Europe

- **European Parliament:** [Draft opinion on shortage of medicines – how to address an emerging problem](#). The Committee on International Trade published an opinion on the shortage of medicines. Generally it strikes a balanced tone between the need to ensure security of supply and understanding the fact that supply chains will inevitably be global.
 - On the impact of COVID on medicines supply chains it notes “the vital role played by functioning global supply chains for medical products, and in particular for medicines; emphasises that an open, rules-based trading system is fundamental to ensuring the global availability of medicines”.
 - It further emphasises that the EU is a leading global exporter of pharmaceutical products; and notes that the protection and enforcement of IP rights in free trade agreements (FTAs) and at the WTO is crucial to the development of new medicines and treatments.
 - Furthermore, it calls on the Commission to present a long-term strategy focused on ensuring the EU’s open strategic autonomy in health and urges the Commission and the Member States to work with the EU’s partners, the WHO and WTO, on establishing an international framework that can prevent the breakdown of supply chains and limit resort to protectionist measures during health crises.

United States

- **STAT News:** [Doctors lambaste federal process for distributing Covid-19 drug remdesivir](#). Hospitals and physicians around the country are sharply criticizing the federal government for the uneven and opaque way it is distributing its supply of the Covid-19 drug remdesivir.
- **Pink Sheet:** [Big Gaps In Vaccination Supplies Highlighted In Whistleblower Complaint; Will RAPID Partnership Save The Day?](#) Ousted BARDA chief says HHS leaders ignored his warnings that the US lacks the necessary supplies of needles and syringes to administer a widespread COVID-19 vaccination campaign.
- **CNN:** [US Strategic National Stockpile proves to be no match for a pandemic](#), President Donald Trump was quick to point the finger of blame at his predecessor, Barack Obama. The stockpile was however not intended or funded for a pandemic, but serves as one piece of the overall supply chain puzzle during a disaster.

MANUFACTURING

- **FiercePharma:** [Pfizer tags 3 U.S. and Belgian manufacturing sites for possible COVID-19 vaccine launch](#). The company plans to select other sites as well. For its part, BioNTech intends to add capacity at two of its facilities in Germany.

VACCINE/ TREATMENT DEVELOPMENT

IFPMA members

- **Times of India:** [Repurposed drugs offer hope in India's Covid fight](#). India's apex body for health research, the Indian Council of Medical Research, has approved and issued detailed guidelines on the use of lopinavir/ritonavir in COVID-19 patients.
- **FOX News:** [Tocilizumab drug shows coronavirus treatment promise, doctor says](#). Dr. Imran Sharief, a Californian pulmonary disease specialist, has voiced promise in tocilizumab (Actemra) drug treatment for critically ill coronavirus patients.

Others

- **CGTN:** [First COVID-19 vaccine test on animals successful](#). PiCoVacc, a vaccine made by Beijing-based Sinovac Biotech, used a crippled virus to prevent the virus from infecting life forms. The researchers injected the vaccine into rhesus macaques.
- **Bloomberg:** [Moderna Poised for Record on Sped-Up Covid-19 Vaccine Push](#). Tal Zaks, Moderna's chief medical officer, discussed plans for a larger vaccine trial this summer that could have results later in the year showing how effective it is.
- **Pulse:** [Korean biotech names claim to be closing in on COVID-19 vaccine, cure](#). According to market tracker GlobalData, the number of vaccine or treatment candidates under development in Korea totals 18 as of May 6 with Genexine claiming it is in the lead in the race for a valid vaccine.
- **The Brussels Times:** [Belgian llama offers hope in search for coronavirus treatment](#). Researchers from Ghent's VIB-UGent biotechnology centre and from Austin's University of Texas are racing to determine whether antibodies produced by the research llama offer any promising leads to develop treatments against SARS-CoV-2.
- **Sky News:** [Convalescent plasma trials begin for COVID-19 treatment](#). The trial will aim to look at the effectiveness of the plasma as a treatment for COVID-19. Plasma has currently been distributed among three NHS trusts, with more to follow over the coming months.

DIAGNOSTICS

- **The Conversation:** [Lasers could speed up coronavirus diagnostics](#). The technique is called Raman spectroscopy to identify viruses by shining a light on a disposable cartridge that collects samples from oral cotton swabs or a person blowing through the device.
- **TechCrunch:** [Apple awards \\$10 million from its Advanced Manufacturing Fund to rapidly scale COVID-19 sample collection kit production](#) of COPAN Diagnostics. The company is focused on producing sample collection kits for testing COVID-19 in US hospitals.

DISEASE SOURCE & CHARACTERISTICS

- **CNBC:** [WHO says it's in talks to send mission to China to investigate source of coronavirus](#). Dr Maria van Kerkhove said during a news conference at WHO HQ that the new mission would be more academic in focus and look at what happened at the beginning in terms of exposures with different animals so that they can look for a new approach to find the zoonotic source.
- **Financial Times:** [From blood clots to 'Covid toe': the medical mysteries of coronavirus](#). The wide variety of Covid-19 symptoms seen by doctors is confounding the scientific community.
- **BBC News:** [Coronavirus mutations: Scientists puzzle over impact](#). Researchers in the US and UK have identified hundreds of mutations to the virus which causes Covid-19. But none has yet established what this will mean for virus spread in the population and for how effective a vaccine might be.

COVID-19 & EARNINGS

- **FiercePharma:** [Teva generics benefit from COVID-19 bump—but the boom may not last](#). Teva's European sales of its generic and over-the-counter products saw an estimated \$100 million boost in the first quarter as the novel coronavirus pandemic sent demand for easy-to-stockpile meds through the roof, CEO Kare Schultz told analysts Thursday.

WHO - COVID-19 UPDATE, 7 May

No media briefing by Dr Tedros today.

WHO AFRO COVID-19 [joint media briefing](#) with WEF – by Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa

- She said there are now around 50,000 confirmed cases and 2000 have lost their lives across the African continent.
- She highlighted the importance of countries using data-driven, evidence-based approaches in the response.
- WHO AFRO is working together with countries to leverage assets in place for preparedness for Ebola, HIV, TB and polio and scale-up coordination, mobilizing people and repair global and local supply chains.
- She voiced her concern about the impact that COVID-19 will have on the ability of African countries to progress towards UHC.
- She stated she is convinced that the tests that have been provided and that are on the national market and those that were provided by the WHO and the Jack Ma Foundation are not contaminated with the virus.
- She said that they are estimating that COVID-19 will peak in four to six weeks if nothing is done.

WHO EURO COVID-19 [media briefing](#) – by Hans Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe

- WHO has sent an expert mission on the ground in Tajikistan who are working with national authorities and health providers to respond to the outbreak in the country. It is the latest of over 60 missions we have conducted across the European Region during this pandemic.
- WHO is deeply troubled by the reports from many countries, including Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Ireland, Russian Federation, Spain, UK, and others of increases in interpersonal violence including violence against women and men, by an intimate partner and against children - because of the COVID-19 response.
- UNFPA has sounded the alarm loud and clear – if lockdowns were to continue for 6 months, we would expect an extra 31 million cases of gender-based violence globally.
- In the coming days, WHO will be releasing an overview of key actions now and in the future to prevent and respond to this surge in violence against children, women and older people.