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**IFPMA Weekly COVID-19 Update
24 April 2020**

Global collaboration to accelerate new COVID-19 health technologies

On April 24, in a launch event co-hosted by WHO Director General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, France's President Emmanuel Macron, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and Melinda Gates, global health leaders including IFPMA [announced](#) an unprecedented [commitment](#) to work together to accelerate the development and production of new vaccines, tests and treatments for COVID-19 and assure equitable access worldwide. The announcement was in support of EU hosted [pledging conference for COVID-19 Global Preparedness](#) on May 4. IFPMA DG Thomas Cueni gave a [supportive statement](#) at the launch event, and IFPMA issued a [press release](#), which we are promoting on social media.

The "Access to COVID-19 tools (ACT) Accelerator" is envisaged to have three distinct pillars: vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. The governance and key components of these partnerships will be further developed over the course of next week in advance of the pledging conference. The "Coordination Hub" to monitor work within the three pillars, and facilitate coordination between the pillars (where necessary) are also still under development. WHO also announced two Special Envoys: Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (Gavi Board Chair) and Sir Andrew Witty (former CEO of GlaxoSmithKline). However, their exact roles remain undefined.

IFPMA will continue to be actively engaged in these discussions.

Contact: [Fumie Griego](#), [Laetitia Bigger](#) (Vaccines), [Morgane De Pol](#) (Communications)

Communications

The first two articles of the [Financial Times special report – FT Health Combating Coronavirus](#), supported by IFPMA, have been published on 21st April. The next articles will focus on the challenges for scaling up manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines, hope for a COVID-19 vaccine and possible impact on vaccine hesitancy, AMR and COVID-19, and pricing and access of COVID-19 treatments and vaccines.

The second IFPMA media briefing is scheduled to take place on 30th April at 14:00 CET and will focus on new and repurposed treatments for COVID-19 and manufacturing and supply chain challenges for treatments. Line-up of speakers include CEO/senior executives from AstraZeneca, Merck, Takeda, Sandoz, Pfizer and CSL.

IFPMA is currently building a dedicated COVID-19 portal, designed to convey our industry's [commitment to address the crisis](#), and feature relevant resources (Statements, News Releases, Videos, etc.). IFPMA is compiling a one pager of industry collaboration, progress and activity against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contact: [Morgane De Pol](#)

UNGA resolution on access to COVID products

The UN has adopted on Monday a resolution on “[International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19](#)”. Throughout this highly expedited process, IFPMA was in close contact with Missions in NY and we are glad to report that the agreed text is a welcome development. It highlights the importance of the private sector, calls governments to refrain from unnecessary stockpiling and does not bring polarizing debates on IP and price transparency. As part of its alliance-building efforts, IFPMA coordinated advocacy with other health industries and issued a [5-association joint statement](#).

Contact: [Guilherme Cintra](#)

Preparations for the World Health Assembly

The exact modalities of this year’s World Health Assembly (WHA73) are still being discussed and a decision is yet to be made on the format WHA73 will take, although a number of options have been tabled and are being considered. Support for holding a virtual “de minimis” Assembly lies mainly in a need to ensure continuity of governance, as well as to give due attention to the COVID-19 pandemic preparedness and response work that has been undertaken thus far. In this context, the European Union has submitted a draft COVID-19 Resolution, likely to be the only “substantive” topic for discussion if a shortened virtual meeting takes place. Given the exceptional circumstances of this WHA, we understand the resolution will most likely be negotiated through a series of online consultations as the proponents are aiming at consensual resolution. IFPMA has officially been asked by the EU to provide industry comments and has coordinated a response through the Global Health Committee. We will provide positive feedback supporting the resolution, while expressing some concerns around voluntary IP pooling language. We will also closely monitor the developments around the resolution, and are preparing policy messages in relation to this, as well as a number of other mechanisms through which to provide our advocacy response.

Contact: [Vanessa Peberdy](#), [Grega Kumer](#)

Biopharmaceutical Industry support for ICMRA coordination of Covid-19 regulatory response

IFPMA, on behalf of ABPI, EFPIA, JMPA & Medicines Australia, sent a letter to the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities ([ICMRA](#)) commending them for taking the initiative to coordinate the international regulatory response and enhance cooperation during the COVID-19 pandemic. International alignment is a much-needed activity to ensure that globally the medicines and vaccines needed to fight against the pandemic are available as well as sustaining clinical research, on-going trials and availability of new and existing medicines and vaccines. In the letter, IFPMA outlined several areas (clinical research, pharmacovigilance, product quality and lifecycle) where enhanced regulatory coordination and cooperation is seen as critical and took the opportunity to highlight its support and willingness to engage in further discussions with ICMRA on these important topics.

Contact: [Janis Bernat](#)

OECD engagement

In his capacity of Chair of the *Business at OECD* (BIAC) Health Committee, Thomas Cueni led the virtual Committee meeting on 20 April, where the membership discussed engagement with the OECD and its COVID-19 strategy. IFPMA will contribute to BIAC outreach efforts with OECD Ambassadors in Paris to

advocate for the OECD to revisit its priorities and reprioritize its Health Committee agenda (mid-June) to include: 1) resilience of healthcare systems; 2) pandemic preparedness and health security, including addressing antimicrobial resistance; 3) strengthening the development of medicines and vaccines with scaling-up of manufacturing.

The OECD released the agenda for an abridged, virtual OECD Expert Group on Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices meeting (7 May), with two main topics: 1) international preparedness and coordination in the COVID-19 crisis, including R&D efforts, procurement, and supply chain monitoring; 2) increasing transparency in pharmaceutical markets with a focus on prices, managed entry agreements, and access to medicines.

Finally, the OECD Competition Committee is planning a session on 15 June for the OECD Member States to explore and discuss the interface between various aspects of the impact of COVID-19 on the enforcement and activities of competition agencies.

Contacts: [Sara Amini](#)

G20 engagement

A virtual meeting of the G20 Health Ministers took place on 19 April to discuss national best practices and develop a roadmap for strengthening the G20 response to the pandemic. The Health Ministers had intended to release a detailed statement after the meeting, but the statement was vetoed by the United States for its references to strengthening the WHO's mandate in coordinating a response to the global pandemic. With no consensus on the statement, the Saudi Chair of the G20 issued a brief [press release](#) outlining the meeting's key topics and the Health Ministers commitment for further actions and collaboration. In consultation with the Global Health Committee, the previously prepared IFPMA Statement to the G20 will not to be published at this time, but will be referred to should the opportunity arises in coming weeks. Plans for the Joint G20 Health & Finance Ministers virtual meeting, originally set for 18 April, are still pending.

As part of the same H20 Digital Dialogue Series, the G20 Health and Development Partnership hosted a meeting with the President of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) H.E. Bandar Hajjar on 22 April. IFPMA took part in the discussion where H.E. Bandar Hajjar presented the USD 2.3 billion allocation to Member Countries within the *IsDB Group Strategic Preparedness and Response Programme for the COVID-19 pandemic*. The Programme aims to support Member Countries' efforts to prevent, contain, mitigate and recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the videoconference, members of the G20 Health and Development Partnership had the opportunity to present their Public-Private Partnerships, SMEs and start-ups (e.g. FIND, PATH, Bugworks), and the IsDB welcomed potential future cooperation.

IFPMA participated in the 23 April H20 Digital Dialogue Series hosted by the G20 Health and Development Partnership, featuring an exchange with Margaritis Schinas, Vice President of the EU Commission. During his presentation, Margaritis Schinas elaborated on the EU response to the COVID-19 pandemic along three clusters: 1) EU response to COVID-19; 2) EU Roadmap: A European roadmap to lifting coronavirus containment measures, and; 3) Debrief on the EU Pledging Conference. On cluster 3, Margaritis Schinas presented the Coronavirus Global Response Summit, an event that will take place on 4 May with the objective to raise USD 8 billion for global pandemic preparedness. During his talk, Margaritis Schinas also stressed how the private sector had an important role to play in the response to global pandemics such as COVID-19.

IFPMA and PhRMA, together with The Business for Health Partnership, are preparing a policy positioning on digital health, to be leveraged in outreach with G20 officials. The paper calls on the G20

to implement, in collaboration with the private sector, policies to allow more effective and widespread use of digital technologies to diagnose, treat, and pay for health care.

Contacts: [Sara Amini](#) and [Luka Srot](#) (Digital)

External Meetings and Events (Week of 27 April):

- **April 30:** 2nd Global Media Briefing
- **May 1:** Weekly IFPMA DG & WHO ADG Call

IFPMA Meetings and Events (Week of 27 April):

- **April 27:** BCR Sherpa Virtual Meeting
- **April 28:** Weekly Covid-19 Heads of Associations
- **April 28:** Access Accelerated Steering Committee
- **April 29:** Weekly Covid-19 Update for Committees

IFPMA Operating Status: IFPMA offices remain closed and all IFPMA staff are working from home until further notice. IFPMA is reviewing Swiss Federal Council's announced plans to [gradually ease measures against the new coronavirus](#): "On 27 April, hospitals will be able to resume all medical procedures, including non-urgent procedures, and outpatient medical practices, hairdressing salons, massage practices and cosmetic studios will be allowed to reopen. DIY stores, garden centres and florists will also be allowed to reopen. The protection of the public and of staff must be assured. These are the steps decided by the Federal Council at its meeting on 16 April. If the situation allows, schools for children of compulsory school age and shops will be able to reopen on 11 May. On 8 June, upper-secondary schools, vocational schools and higher education institutions, as well as museums, zoos and libraries may reopen. The Federal Council also issued further details with regard to protecting workers at especially high risk... The Federal Council has not yet determined further phases. A decision as to when large-scale events will again be allowed to go ahead will be taken at one of its next meetings."