

## IFPMA Covid-19 Update - 3 June

### Top news:

- The UN and the ICRC have called on governments, the private sector, international organizations and civil society to unite towards “a people’s vaccine” for Covid-19.
- Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands join forces to negotiate the acquisition of potential corona vaccines.
- Controversy over hydroxychloroquine study (which led WHO and governments to halt clinical trials/ banning the use of the drug) is increasing with the Lancet medical journal expressing doubts over the accuracy of the study in an official statement.
- Dr Tedros just announced that the hydroxychloroquine arm of the Solidarity Trial was endorsed by the Executive Group for continuation.
- Patient groups call on AstraZeneca to make its vaccine candidate patent-free.

### IP, PRICING & ACCESS

- **ICRC:** [Uniting for a people's vaccine against Covid-19](#). The UN and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have called on governments, the private sector, international organizations and civil society to unite towards “a people’s vaccine” for Covid-19: *“A global social contract for a people’s vaccine against Covid-19 is a moral imperative that brings us all together in our shared humanity.”*
- **IP Watchdog:** [WHO’s C-TAP Initiative Pushes for Non-Exclusive Global Licensing Amid Pharma Industry Concerns](#). The day before WHO’s C-TAP platform was launched, a number of top executives from pharmaceutical firms including Pfizer, AstraZeneca and GlaxoSmithKline made remarks questioning the initiative at an online forum coordinated by IFPMA. While many WHO member nations seem supportive of the initiative and its corresponding open access resolution, the US, UK and Switzerland have each reportedly opposed WHO’s platform.
- **Common Dreams:** [Patients Call on AstraZeneca to Make Coronavirus Vaccine Patent-free](#). Patient groups have joined with campaigners to ask AstraZeneca for full disclosure of their plans, outlining the need for vaccines to be patent-free. The campaigners are concerned that the vaccine will remain out-of-reach to many people across the world.

### VACCINE MANUFACTURING

- **Netherlands MoH:** [Cooperation Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands in acquiring vaccines for European and other countries](#). Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands join forces to negotiate with developers and producers of potential corona vaccines. The four countries are jointly exploring various promising initiatives and are in discussion with various pharmaceutical companies. The aim is to allow vaccine production to take place on European soil wherever possible.
- **The Japan Times:** [Japan pushes homegrown coronavirus vaccines to secure supply](#). Japanese drugmakers are accelerating their development of vaccines for the coronavirus, with the government pushing homegrown efforts to secure stable supplies. “In terms of the need to secure the necessary volume, a vaccine produced domestically by a Japanese company is best,” said an official of the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry.

### SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES

- **The News Indian Express:** [Coronavirus and the supply chain](#). The coronavirus pandemic is forcing Indian manufacturers to re-examine their supply chain assumptions. The supply chain strategy that made the most sense in pre-Covid-19 days no longer seems particularly smart.
- **Fierce Pharma:** [Drugmakers struggle to meet demand for antidepressant Zoloft amid COVID-19](#). The COVID-19 pandemic has tested pharma's supply chain and spawned several drug shortages. Now, with mental health suffering, antidepressant Zoloft and its generics are in short supply. A number of drugmakers are having trouble keeping up with higher demand, while some can't get their hands on active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) to make the medicine, the FDA said.
- **Medium:** [Exacerbated Supply Chain Challenges During the COVID-19 Crisis & Creative Solutions that Bring Hope for People Living with NCDs](#). The Coalition for Access to NCD Medicines and Products recognizes the broad impact COVID-19 has had on disrupting the supply chain for health commodities, such as the imposition of export restrictions documented across 80 countries on medical supplies like personal protective equipment for health personnel, medical devices and pharmaceuticals.

## FUNDING

- **EP:** [MEPs call for €300 million EU pledge to the Vaccine Alliance](#). Parliament's Committee on Development is calling for the EU to make an ambitious pledge of €300 million to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, during the Global Vaccine Summit on 4 June. This funding will also ensure that the immunisation systems needed to deliver a COVID-19 vaccine are sustained throughout the pandemic.

## VACCINE DEVELOPMENT

### Others

- **Business Insider:** [Fauci just criticized Moderna for touting preliminary data on its coronavirus vaccine, but said the results look 'very promising'](#). Though National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director, Dr. Anthony Fauci says the results are "very promising," he told said that he didn't like how the company jumped on sharing the early data. The company, Fauci said, instead got excited when they saw the positive data and put out a press release without waiting for more information.
- **BA Times:** [Argentina joins the world race to develop a coronavirus vaccine](#). Argentine scientists take first steps in developing an oral formulation to prevent infection from the virus. It will be the first initiative of its kind in Latin America.
- **Daily Sabah:** [Turkey, Russia to start joint work to develop COVID-19 vaccine](#). Turkish Health Minister Fahrettin Koca and his Russian counterpart Mikhail Murashko announced that the countries start joint studies to develop a vaccine against the coronavirus.
- **Forbes:** [What To Expect As Moderna's COVID-19 Vaccine Commences Phase 2 Trials](#). The company intends to enrol a total of 600 participants in the study, up from 45 participants in the phase 1 study. However, the trials should be quicker, as Moderna said it is looking to start phase 3 trials by July.

- **Exaptive:** [Exaptive partners with IDDO for COVID-19 clinical trial database](#). In partnership with the Infectious Diseases Data Observatory (IDDO), Exaptive has created an open access, [cloud-based knowledge graph](#) for a COVID-19 clinical trial database.

## TREATMENT DEVELOPMENT & REPURPOSED DRUGS

### *Remdesivir*

- **Deccan Herald:** [India's drug regulator grants Gilead Sciences marketing authorisation for remdesivir](#). The drug has been allowed for restricted emergency use for a maximum five-day period for the treatment of suspected or laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in adults and children hospitalised with severe symptoms, subject to several safeguard.

### *Hydroxychloroquine*

- **The Guardian:** [Governments and WHO changed Covid-19 policy based on suspect data from tiny US company](#). The WHO and a number of national governments have changed their COVID-19 policies and treatments on the basis of data from a little-known US healthcare analytics company Surgisphere, which provided the database behind Lancet and New England Journal of Medicine hydroxychloroquine studies.
- **Arab News:** [The Lancet casts doubt over hydroxychloroquine study](#). In a statement, the medical journal acknowledged “important” questions over the research, after dozens of scientists issued an open letter last week raising concerns about its methodology and transparency around the data, which was provided by the firm Surgisphere.
- **Bloomberg:** [France Seeks Answers on Lancet's Hydroxychloroquine Study](#). The French government wrote to the Lancet to request a review of the raw data used in a now controversial study into the effects of an old malaria drug called hydroxychloroquine to treat Covid-19.

### *Other*

- **BBC News:** [Ibuprofen tested as a treatment](#). The team from London's Guy's and St Thomas' hospital and King's College believe the drug, which is an anti-inflammatory as well as a painkiller, could treat breathing difficulties. [In the trial](#), half of the patients will receive ibuprofen in addition to usual care.
- **Live Mint:** [Russia backing Avifavir to treat Covid-19 good news for India](#). Russia's approval of the antiviral drug Avifavir to treat COVID-19 is good news for India as it is based on an influenza medication already in advanced clinical trials in India, say scientists. Avifavir is derived from Favipiravir.
- **YonHap News:** [S. Korea to spend 100 bln won in developing COVID-19 treatments, vaccines](#). South Korea said that it will invest US\$82.15 million in developing treatments and vaccines for the coronavirus to focus mainly on supporting research on treatment using plasma, antibody treatment and finding efficacy in existing drugs.

## GLOBAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

- **Bloomberg:** [Worst May Be Over for Biggest Arab Economies as Businesses Adapt](#). Business conditions in the Arab world's three largest economies

deteriorated at a slower pace in May as governments began to lift some lockdown restrictions while companies adjusted by slimming down staff and cutting salaries.

## GLOBAL HEALTH & SOCIAL IMPACT

- **CNBC Africa:** [Disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on racial and ethnic minorities needs to be urgently addressed – Bachelet](#). Rising disparities in how COVID-19 is affecting communities, and the major disproportionate impact it is having on racial and ethnic minorities, including people of African descent, have exposed alarming inequalities within our societies, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachele.
- **CBC:** [More than 600 nurses have died around the world from COVID-19, association says](#). "In the last two months, we have seen the number of deaths of nurses as a result of coronavirus around the world rise from 100 to now in excess of 600 and we think worldwide the number of healthcare workers who could be infected by the virus is around 450,000," Howard Catton, CEO of ICN said.

## EPIDEMIOLOGY

- **The Guardian:** [Obesity and coronavirus: how can a higher BMI increase your risk?](#) Experts call for more weight loss treatment in UK as studies show obese people are more vulnerable.

## WHO - COVID-19 UPDATE, 3 June

Statement by Dr Tedros during today's media briefing [here](#).

- Updated guidelines on the clinical management of patients with COVID-19 was issued.
- It includes a COVID-19 care pathway, which describes the steps followed by a patient from screening to discharge, to ensure delivery of safe and quality care, while stopping onward transmission.
- WHO continues to train millions of health workers all over the world to apply our guidance.
- Our OpenWHO.org online learning platform has now registered 3 million enrolments for our courses on COVID-19.
- And we have added two new courses: one on decontamination and sterilization of medical devices, and another on environmental cleaning and disinfection.
- In total, we're now offering 12 courses in 27 languages.
- The Executive Group received this recommendation and endorsed the continuation of all arms of the Solidarity Trial, including hydroxychloroquine.
- The Executive Group will communicate with the principal investigators in the trial about resuming the hydroxychloroquine arm.

## **New WHO Resources:**

- **WHO:** [Maintaining essential health services: operational guidance for the COVID-19 context](#). This document expands on the content of pillar 9 of the COVID-19 strategic preparedness and response plan.

- **WHO:** [Case Report Form for suspected cases of multisystem inflammatory syndrome \(MIS\) in children and adolescents temporally related to COVID-19.](#)