



Responding to the Coronavirus Pandemic

Dear friend of UICC,

We live in unprecedented times. Every day we hear about the growing number of people infected with coronavirus and the deaths caused as a result. Despite the best efforts of governments around the world, the virus continues to spread at an alarming rate. Countries with good health systems have struggled to contain the virus and their hospitals are under considerable pressure as a result. As the virus enters countries with weaker health systems, the results could be catastrophic, impacting the lives of millions.

Cancer patients are affected in so many ways. Evidence to date shows that they are more likely to contract coronavirus and, often, because of their underlying health issues and their treatment, are more likely to become seriously ill, and potentially die. As health systems struggle to cope with the increasing number of coronavirus patients, cancer treatments are being delayed and more lives are being put at risk.

The pandemic is affecting all UICC's members and partners and concerted, united action is required if we are to protect ourselves, our family, friends and colleagues from infection. The downturn in the economy, which we have witnessed across countries, will impact the funding of cancer organisations, research, treatment and care for many months to come. The impact of coronavirus may seem immense today, but the ripple effect will continue throughout 2020 and beyond.

UICC, as an international cancer organisation, takes its role and responsibility in global health seriously. This is a time when our support for the cancer community is more important than ever. It is incumbent on us to respond to the crisis positively. We have already moved our offices in Geneva to remote working, cancelled all immediate face-to-face meetings and events globally, turned our attention to the support of our 1200 members, and we are already planning new online services to help our community manage their way through the new challenges that have arisen as a result of coronavirus. The management team and the Board have worked closely together in the last couple of weeks to decide how best to respond to the new paradigm in which we find ourselves. We have developed some key principles:

1. As a global health organisation, we should not participate in, nor encourage face-to-face meetings. In all our activities, we should work to reduce public health risk and not add to it.
2. As a membership organisation, we should focus our attention on helping UICC members through one of the most difficult times faced by the health community.
3. As an NGO based in Geneva fulfilling a much-needed role in the health community, it is essential that we continue to be financially viable through the anticipated economic downturn.

We have therefore made some key decisions which we wish to communicate to you.

Firstly, **we will not hold any face-to-face meetings or events in 2020.**

- The World Cancer Leaders' Summit in 2020 will be cancelled – the next Summit will be in Boston in October 2021.
- The World Cancer Congress, which was due to take place this year in October in Oman will be delayed to 16-18 March 2021 and will be held in Oman as planned. Our hosts, the Oman Cancer Association and the National Oncology Centre, Royal Hospital Muscat, have been wonderfully supportive in helping us arrive at this conclusion.
- Given that we are still unclear on the potential situation regarding coronavirus at that time, we will make a final decision in September 2020, as to whether it is feasible and appropriate to proceed with a Congress in March 2021.
- In addition, we shall discuss with our partners whether our planned regional 2020 Leadership in Action meetings, various workshops and Geneva-based events can be delivered virtually or delayed, as appropriate.

Secondly, **we will focus all our efforts on supporting our members.**

- We will continue to deliver online and virtual services where this is our current and effective operating model and rethink our approach to activities that relied upon in-person interaction.
- Through a suite of virtual services, we will ensure that our members continue to receive the support we are committed to deliver.
- In response to member requests, more resources, webinars and online support will be developed to help them address the challenge of coronavirus in their context and country.
- A key role for UICC will be to connect our members around the world so that they can help each other.

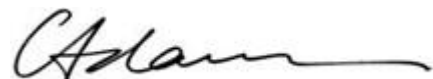
Finally, as a global health organisation **we will closely work with our partners**, the World Health Organization and other international bodies to address the impact of coronavirus around the world. In such difficult times we must all pull together, recognise and leverage the power of partnership across different sectors, finding new ways to work together, share information and best practices to hasten the end to this crisis.

UICC is blessed to have a wonderful team in Geneva, alongside such amazing, committed and talented members and partners who share our ambition to help the world prevent cancer and ensure that patients receive the best treatment and care possible. We thank all our partners for their support as we shift our priorities and working model in 2020 in response to this unique set of circumstances.

Yours sincerely,



HRH Princess Dina Mired
President



Dr Cary Adams
Chief Executive Officer