



## **ILDS STATEMENT ON THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK – APRIL 2020**

The worldwide spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a serious public health concern. It is having an impact on the way people around the world live and work.

The International League of Dermatological Societies (ILDS) and the International Foundation for Dermatology (IFD) have been monitoring the situation; following advice from authorities such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and national health authorities and have been taking actions to protect the well-being of those that we work with around the world.

In addition, we recognise that we *all* have a critical role in supporting efforts to protect individuals and populations around the world and provide specific guidance where possible with regards to those with skin conditions. We are aware that a number of national and regional dermatology societies will be providing their own guidance and we hope to complement that with guidance that can be an additional resource for our members wherever they are based in the world. We will share guidance via email and on our website concerning treatment for patients with skin diseases during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We join with you as leaders of dermatological organisations, health professionals, researchers, patients and patient organisations leaders, policy-makers and other key stakeholders in solidarity towards our common goal of protecting public health at this difficult time. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the ILDS Secretariat by emailing [info@ilds.org](mailto:info@ilds.org).

This statement covers the following areas:

1. Changes to ILDS working practices and plans
2. Protecting public health: Supporting efforts to raise awareness of how everyone can protect themselves from COVID-19

### **1. Changes to ILDS working practices and plans**

The ILDS prioritises the health and safety of our Secretariat team in London, our Board Members, Members and those that we work with around the world. Therefore, the ILDS has taken the following steps:

- **ILDS Secretariat:**
  - The ILDS staff is working from home indefinitely and the ILDS office in London is closed to visitors. The Secretariat can be contacted during office hours (Monday to Friday) via email to [info@ilds.org](mailto:info@ilds.org) or on their usual email addresses.
- **ILDS and IFD Meetings and Conferences:**
  - The ILDS has cancelled its in person participation in a number of upcoming meetings and conferences and will review this decision periodically.
  - A number of ILDS and IFD meetings, including the Migrant Dermatology Health Conference, are being rescheduled or reorganised as virtual meetings using tele or



video-conferencing facilities. If you were due to attend an ILDS/IFD meeting you will be contacted about this directly.

- **ILDS Member Organisations:** We understand that these are challenging times as we all adapt to working virtually. We will need to embrace other methods of working including maximising the potential of videoconferencing to stay in touch. The ILDS will continue to offer our Members a range of opportunities to engage with us throughout this period and will endeavour to be flexible within the constraints of operating in this environment.
  - **ILDS Certificates of Appreciation Nominations 2020 – deadline extended to 30 April 2020** – we recognise that you will have other priorities at the moment and so have extended the deadline for nominations by 6 weeks to 30 April.
  - **ILDS Membership fees 2020** – if you have not yet paid your annual membership fees and it would be difficult to at this time please do contact the ILDS office on [office@ilds.org](mailto:office@ilds.org) to discuss this.
  - **Topic and speaker submissions for 25<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Dermatology (WCD)** – during April we will be asking ILDS Members for their suggestions for topics and speakers for next WCD to be held in Singapore in 2023.
  - **Let us know how we can support each other:** we welcome exchange with regards to the challenges for you and your members face and how we can share experiences which will be beneficial to us all in this fast-changing situation. Please share your experiences by emailing [info@ilds.org](mailto:info@ilds.org)
- **ILDS and IFD Partners and Grant Recipients:** we understand that your project plans may be changing in response to the situation. Please do contact us at any time if you'd like to discuss how this affects projects and activities.

## 2. **Protecting public health: Supporting efforts to raise awareness of how everyone can protect themselves from COVID-19**

We all have a role to play in sharing public health information on how the public can protect themselves from COVID-19. Help to raise awareness by repeating and sharing WHO's advice to the public. Preventing transmission of the virus is something that all those involved in health and healthcare can undertake in their daily practice and work. The World Health Organization outlines advice in the following areas:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Maintain social distancing
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Practice respiratory hygiene
- If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing follow the directions of your local health authority
- Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider

See the WHO website for up-to-date information:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>



At this time, we recognise that health professionals are on the front-line in diagnosing and treating the virus and are themselves at risk of contracting the virus. As well as following the advice for the general public, they should be provided with and, ensure that they use, the necessary protective equipment in order to be able to protect themselves adequately.

### **Help the WHO by completing a quick survey on training and upskilling needs for Health Workers**

The World Health Organization is rapidly upscaling training via a number of digital, easily accessible learning applications. They are asking for people to complete an online survey which will help them to design and prioritise content and delivery methodologies that support and enable health workers worldwide to boost their knowledge and skills related to the COVID-19 outbreak. The survey is anonymous and no identifiable information on any individuals will be shared or presented in the survey results. Please complete the survey and share with your networks: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PHH8ZYT>

### **Resources and further information:**

- World Health Organization:
  - General: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
  - Country & Technical Guidance: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>
  - EPI-WIN: WHO information network for epidemics: <https://www.who.int/teams/risk-communication>
- American Academy of Dermatology: <https://www.aad.org/member/practice/managing/coronavirus>
- British Association of Dermatologists: <http://www.bad.org.uk/healthcare-professionals/covid-19>
- European Dermatology Forum: <https://www.edf.one/home/Guidelines/Guidelines.html>
- PsoProtect is an international registry for health care providers to report outcomes of COVID-19 in individuals with psoriasis: <http://www.psoprotect.org>