



## ESMO Statement 2020 World Health Assembly

### Agenda Item 3: Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General devoted to the COVID-19 pandemic response in advance of the opening of the Health Assembly

Honourable Chair, Esteemed Delegates,

The European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) is a global network of more than 25,000 oncology professionals from over 160 countries. ESMO's core mission is to improve equal access to optimal high-quality cancer care for all patients.

ESMO welcomes the Resolution on COVID-19 Response and calls on national governments to:

1. Protect and care for those at higher risk such as healthcare professionals and people with pre-existing conditions, for example those with NCDs, which includes people with immune-compromised illnesses such as cancer.
2. Secure continued access to essential cancer and palliative care medicines and services in a way that avoids competition with resources required for COVID-19. The '[ESMO-Magnitude of Clinical Benefit Scale](#)' grades the benefit anticipated from anti-cancer therapies, and can support decisions of value-based resource allocation.
3. Provide institutes and health workers with ethical and methodological decision-making guidelines, where financial and physical cancer resources must be re-allocated or are in shortage.
4. Develop an action plan to address the needs of cancer patients who are unable to access cancer services on a timely basis due to travel restrictions or for fear of leaving their homes and contracting the virus.

To support WHO's global efforts, ESMO has launched:

1. An '[ESMO COVID-19 and Cancer Portal](#)' on the ESMO website ([www.esmo.org](http://www.esmo.org)). The portal provides information, educational materials, '[ESMO recommendations for cancer management in the era of COVID-19](#)' for oncology professionals, an '[ESMO Guide for Cancer Patients](#)', and links to WHO norms and guidance.
2. An '[ESMO-CoCARE Registry](#)', which is an international collaborative initiative with a cross-tumour database, designed to rapidly gather epidemiological, demographic, cancer-and-COVID-19-related data, focusing on the virus's impact on cancer patients. Its goal is to provide recommendations on how to minimize the risk to cancer patients both now and in the future.

Thank you.