

Brussels – 19th March 2020

**COVID-19 and its implications for the World PI Week 2020:
10 weeks of campaigning for the 10 years' anniversary**

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World PI Week Board has taken the decision to extend in time the World Primary Immunodeficiency Week campaign (22-29 April) to protect public health and the health of patients living with primary immunodeficiency. World PI Week will run until 1st July 2020. All campaign supporters are encouraged to join online activities wherever in-person events are not advisable in their regions.

COVID-19 and primary immunodeficiency

Any respiratory virus that can be spread from person-to-person may be a risk for patients with primary immunodeficiency diseases (PID)¹. While there is no tangible evidence to date, it is believed that PID patients might be at higher risk for this infection or a more severe course of the disease². [The World Health Organisation](#) (WHO) and the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) provide recommendations to reduce exposure to and transmission of COVID-19. Patients and their relatives need to take extra care to prevent from getting this infection³; and should closely keep track of developments in their region and applicable advice from health authorities. For further information, please refer to the [joint statement](#) from IPOPI, ESID, INGID, APSID, ARAPID, ASID, CIS, LASID and SEAPID on the COVID-19 epidemics.

Implications for the World PI Week 2020 resulting from the outbreak

World PI Week is an important milestone for the primary immunodeficiency community. In particular, this year marks the 10th campaign anniversary. Momentum needs to arise from the campaign while ensuring that none of the actions undermines public health nor the health of primary immunodeficiency patients joining the celebrations.

Extension in time: 10 weeks of campaigning

For this reason, this year, the campaign will be extended. World PI Week 2020 will start on 22nd of April and will run for 10 weeks, until the 1st of July 2020, in reference to the 10th anniversary.

World PI Week encourages all individuals and organizations contributing to the campaign to closely monitor the situation in their regions and adhere to the guidance of health authorities when considering next steps regarding their participation or the conduct of their operations in relation to the campaign. This is critical as the epidemiological situation and the management of the pandemic might differ from one country to another. Protection measures should be taken when carrying out activities, as [recommended by](#) the WHO.

This extension in time will provide more flexibility and the possibility to postpone on-site activities and physical meetings where necessary. In-person activities to mark World PI Week are also encouraged later in the year, depending on the health situation.

Increasing online celebrations on 22-29 April

From the 22-29 April (the original campaign dates), emphasis will be placed on online awareness raising and advocacy. All campaign supporters, including patients and patient organizations, healthcare professionals and medical societies, industry partners, policymakers and everyone interested in supporting primary immunodeficiency awareness are invited to join these efforts. More information on online forms of engagement in the campaign can be found on the World PI Week website [here](#) together with the many educational and informative materials [available](#) to spread the word. Further news will be shared soon.

¹ Joint statement on the current epidemics of new Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 — COVID-19. From IPOPI, ESID, INGID, APSID, ARAPID, ASID, CIS, LASID, SEAPID. Available at: https://ipopi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID19_Mar13v1_EN.pdf

² Idem 1

³ Idem 1