

## Communication from the Spanish General Medical Council in light of the global Coronavirus pandemic

With regards to the Covid-19 epidemic, the Spanish General Medical Council (*CGCOM*) would like to provide the following input:

1. We send a strong message of unconditional support to the thousands of doctors who are making a huge effort and dedication to attend to those infected with Covid-19, their family and contacts, without prejudice to normal care. Likewise, our thoughts are with all healthcare professionals involved in this difficult challenge. We are aware of the great difficulties arising as a result of the increase in cases, particularly in the Autonomous Communities of Madrid and La Rioja, the municipalities of La Bastida and Vitoria-Gasteiz (País Vasco) and Miranda de Ebro (Castilla y León), thus we highly value the recruitment efforts and support plans being put in place. It is time to spare no expense or regulatory effort in order to have as many forces as possible in the best conditions.

2. At *CGCOM* we highly value the extensive range of measures being implemented in different territories by different Governments in order to control the epidemic, which is now a global COVID-19 pandemic. Social isolation must be strengthened homogeneously throughout the entire Spanish State. All Autonomous Communities may be highly affected over the coming weeks, so we urge greater coordination between them under the leadership of the Ministry of Health.

Particularly, we want to recognise the effort made to consider both quarantines and COVID-19 infections as professional contingencies.

3. We consider the protection of healthcare staff as a guarantor of public health. Shortage of personal protective equipment, masks, face protection, gowns and others must be avoided; healthcare authorities should actively assess that there are no shortages of supplies, as well as provide rapid channels of communication for healthcare professionals to warn of such shortages. In any case, we must not lower the level of safety of any protocol as a consequence of material supply shortages. Urgent measures must be taken to resolve this situation (increase in the production of essential healthcare products, involvement of other sectors such as the armed forces, civil protection, etc.) with sufficient purpose-orientated funding (*financiación finalista*) for Autonomous Communities.

4. All efforts, both budgetary and regulatory, must be devoted in order to be able to face the different present and medium-term scenarios, both for hiring staff and purchasing supplies, thus we consider the necessary inter-ministerial coordination to be appropriate. Improving diagnostic capabilities is of particular importance. The delay in obtaining PCR (polymerase chain reaction) or non-accessibility to it supposes enormous uncertainty for patients and workers and makes it difficult to contain the epidemic.

5. We urge that home isolation should be rigorous and controlled. Home care of patients with COVID-19 should be adequately monitored by the closest and/or most operational care teams in order to avoid situations of abandonment and lack of clinical control of infected patients with risk factors in their homes.

6. All health resources, professionals, Civil Protection, Security Forces, Political Groups and citizens must work in a coordinated, loyal and committed way. It is time to join forces. We are facing an unknown situation and we must be careful in the evaluations, which must be carried out once we have overcome this crisis. The medical profession is asking everyone to put in as much effort as possible. Under all circumstances we will continue to honour the commitment to medicine and patients.

*In Madrid, on 12<sup>th</sup> March  
2020*