

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Communications

29 March 2020

Overview

As a Nation, we are facing one of the biggest global health challenges of our time. At home and around the world people are facing uncertainty, anxiety and new ways of living their lives.

As an industry, we recognise the critical role we must play, both in the urgent response to this rapidly evolving health crisis, but also in the recovery of Australia. To succeed, every aspect of the Australian healthcare delivery system has an essential role to play and it is imperative, we work together now in a collaborative and supportive way.

Our Current Priorities

As an industry and member of the Australian community – our critical priorities, at the present time, must be:

- Focusing our expertise and capabilities in the fight against COVID19 – to uncover the urgently needed measures to protect and treat the community.
- Ensuring the supply of essential medicines to patients in our community who need them.
- Working collaboratively with Government and other organisations to actively manage and pre-empt the healthcare delivery needs as they emerge.
- Recognising and supporting Australia's healthcare professionals working on the frontline.

Focus For Communications

From a communications perspective, our immediate focus is in three areas:

FIGHTING COVID19

Directing our innovative efforts to fight the coronavirus.

MEDICINE SUPPLIES

Maintaining supply of essential medicines.

RESPONSIBILITY & COMMITMENT

Supporting science and evolving healthcare.



SCIENCE

Deploying our scientific expertise and capabilities in the fight against COVID-19

- On a local and global level the industry is working together, alongside leading research institutions and Governments, to focus research efforts and share expertise – including diagnostic testing capability, potential compounds, new therapies and data on registered medicines and vaccines.
- As potential treatments or vaccines are discovered the industry stands ready to apply its clinical trial expertise to ensure they are safe and effective and can be developed as quickly as possible.
 - Global estimates are 80 clinical trials currently underway (IFPMA).
- Existing medicines may now provide the treatment bridge while we uncover vaccines or the cure. Treatments for malaria, multiple sclerosis and anti-viral medicines are now being tested in patients with COVID-19.
- Globally and locally, our manufacturing facilities are ready to ramp-up production as new solutions emerge.



SUPPLY

Maintaining supply of medicines to Australians is our critical priority

- The supply of essential medicines to Australians who rely on them is our priority commitment.
- We are working in close partnership with Federal (and State) Governments and the local healthcare community to respond to the unprecedented surge in demand.
- We endorse the Government messages to reassure patients and the community their medicines are available and stockpiling is unnecessary.
- As an industry our companies are working around the clock to monitor and assess our supplies, locally and globally, to ensure they can get to where they are needed.
- Our manufacturing facilities around the world are open and continue to make millions of doses of medicines and vaccines every day. Strict measures are in place to ensure our teams and facilities are protected and able to maintain production.



RESPONSIBILITY

Our commitment and responsibility to healthcare delivery and scientific innovation

- As a responsible industry we are continuing to support Australian healthcare workers working on the frontline. The health of patients, the community and healthcare workers are the industry's utmost priority and will continue to be as this crisis unfolds.
- During this unprecedented time we will ensure patient groups and relevant organisations are kept fully updated with information to share with their communities.
- Our collaboration with research institutions will continue to ensure they have support needed to maintain their important scientific work. This includes maintaining clinical trials, where feasible, to facilitate their completion and assessment.
- We are leading and supporting new and innovative ways to interact efficiently with the health professional community and create new forms of healthcare delivery – including treatment within the home, remote telehealth capabilities and virtual training.
- We continue to work with the Therapeutic Goods Administration and Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee to introduce new medicines and vaccines as they become available.

Medicines Australia will continue to provide updates as we move through this difficult time.