



TRANSLATION

Joint Statement of the General Councils of Dentists, Nurses, Pharmacists, Doctors and Veterinarians concerning the COVID-19 pandemic

- The current situation forces us to be very demanding in requesting political and health officer to make urgent and effective decisions. The situation in some Autonomous Communities demands this. Not a minute to lose.
- A significant percentage of those infected (approximately 14%) are healthcare professionals. This fact causes enormous concern in the professional organizations we represent, and it is also a risk from the health point of view, since it is causing the national health system to be in a situation close to collapse in some Autonomous Communities, and practically on the brink on human resource capacity. This is causing health professionals to make a noteworthy effort in addition to their usual tasks.
- Health professionals are in a situation of total insecurity and helplessness, when carrying out our public health and prevention work in inadequate and very risky health conditions, as there is a lack of supply of the necessary material and protective equipment to ensure the required safety, both for us and the patients. For this reason, we urgently request that, at all healthcare levels (hospitals, healthcare centers, consulting rooms, dental and veterinary clinics, pharmacies) without exception, all health protection measures be available to guarantee the safety of each one of the professionals who are giving a permanent service fighting against this Pandemic.
- As representatives of 721,000 health professionals in Spain, both in the public and private sectors, we would like to highlight the teamwork being carried out in this crisis against coronavirus, both at a preventive and healthcare level. We wish to acknowledge and encourage all of them, regardless of the type and place of practice.
- We believe that no health resource should be underestimated or undervalued during this crisis. It is necessary to be broad-minded when making decisions related to health and to move away from inappropriate, unnecessary and ideological debates that only produce paralysis and loss of opportunity. This is not a time for evaluations, discrepancies or reproaches, but a time to demand effective and urgent actions, a time of solidarity, commitment to service, and to join forces, with conviction and forcefulness, to help resolve as soon as possible this health and social emergency situation, in order to win the battle against the worst known health crisis in decades.
- A strong national policy on existing healthcare human resources needs to be implemented to prevent a collapse of the system that will further worsen the current situation. On the other hand, all necessary actions must be carried out quickly and compellingly to provide healthcare personnel with the material and equipment necessary to carry out their activity with the greatest guarantees for all. Otherwise, we will have to cope with an even more difficult situation with unforeseeable consequences. We must minimize the risks derived from our services. We assume and will assume our commitments, but we need to perform our duties with the maximum security and with the least possible risks for us and, especially, for citizens and patients.

- In the case of dental clinics, all the protection material available was donated as a measure of solidarity due to the seriousness of the situation, so the continuity of clinical activity can significantly increase the risk of transmission. For this reason, except for urgent and emergency situations, we consider that it is necessary to decree the closing of dental clinics during this health crisis, setting public and private centres for emergency care.
- Since the beginning of this crisis, pharmacists, as health professionals, have made the network of 22,000 pharmacies available to health authorities as health facilities that serve all citizens on the front line and tirelessly. With responsibility and commitment, we make ourselves available to help reconcile the measures of staying at home and universal access to all treatments – whether out-patient or hospital – that avoid the risk of contagion, especially in vulnerable, dependent or home quarantined people.
- Veterinarians want to continue defending public health by guaranteeing the traceability of the food chain and the animal health and welfare, and therefore we also urgently request protection and biosafety guarantees, both public and private.
- Likewise, it is vital that diagnostic tests are available as soon as possible to minimize the possibility of the pandemic spreading, further collapsing the available health services.
- We express once again our total commitment to the national and regional governments in this situation of health emergency. We also request to be considered when making decisions, as representatives of the healthcare professionals.
- Finally, we want to express our gratitude to all citizens for their commitment and responsibility and thank them for their applauds of recognition. But, today, we have to raise our tone of petition and ask them for an extra effort in relation to preventive measures. Staying at home is an obligation. For our elders, for our families, for our neighbours, for those who have less, for everyone. Together, we will win.

Madrid, 24th March 2020