Unions and Civil Society Organisations' Statement calling for public health to be prioritised over profits

(25 March 2020) EPSU has co-signed a Civil Society Organisations' statement addressed to the European Commission and MEPs which highlights the need for an all-encompassing public health response from the European Union and national governments to the COVID-19 crisis. Amongst other things, this requires all medical tools developed in response to the crisis to be free of charge at the point of delivery, particularly for vulnerable populations.

In public health emergencies such as this, we cannot allow a 'business as usual' approach in which market dynamics dictate the price of medical care at the expense of rapid access, and where financial considerations - rather than public health - guide where and when products will be available.

The statement stresses how the broken R&D model creates crises such as the

current pandemic, highlights the urgency of prioritising health needs over profits and demands that the EU and member states adopt measures such as pro-public clauses for transparency, affordability, availability and non-exclusive licences for coronavirus R&D.

The mistakes in responding to previous epidemics cannot be repeated. The COVID-19 pandemic is a wake-up call for us all. By ensuring transparency and good governance, supporting public research institutions, and by preventing excessive prices of medicines and vaccines, national governments and the EU will be better prepared for future epidemics and pandemics.

For more information on a response to the Corona virus which prioritises people over profit:

- EPSU's statement on the Corona virus related to workers and our public health systems
- EPSU's statement on the European response to COVID 19
- EPSU's open letter to the European Council Commission on protecting health workers
- EPSU's article on the safety and staffing challenges facing health and social services

- Log in to post comments

- Joint Civil Society Organisations Statement 25 March COVID-19

- Printer-friendly version

Policies
Health
Health and Safety
Sectors
Health and Social Services
Networks
Public Services
Other organizations
EC
EP