



## **WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY 73<sup>rd</sup> EDITION**

*Written statements exceptionally considered under provisional agenda item 3 Address  
by WHO Director-General devoted to the COVID-19 pandemic response in advance of  
the opening of the Health Assembly*

### **STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF NEPHROLOGY**

Honorable chair, distinguished delegates,

The ISN urges the WHO and member states to recognize the impact of COVID-19 on patients with acute or permanent kidney failure, many of whom face interruption or unavailability of life-saving treatments such as dialysis and transplant. In those circumstances, unavailability of treatment will lead to severely increased mortality.

Preliminary data show that about 20-30% of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 develop kidney failure, leading to a surge in requirement for dialysis. The increased demand of limited resources severely compromises treatments of this acute, potentially reversible complication of COVID-19. Further, the breakdown of health systems and disruptions due to lockdowns have had a severe impact on the ability of patients with advanced kidney disease to access regular dialysis. Even a brief interruption in chronic dialysis treatment is a death sentence. Patients with a kidney transplant may experience transplant rejection if deprived of immunosuppressive medications.

Hence, we call upon Member States and WHO to:

- Ensure a timely treatment of acute and chronic kidney disease including access to essential medications, dialysis equipment and supplies, and safe transplantation.
- Ensure availability of adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect the healthcare workers by overseeing their purchase, distribution, supply, and responsible use, and ensure rapid scaling-up of SARS-CoV2 testing capabilities.
- Ensure that patients with NCDs, who by being affected by severe co-morbidities including diabetes, malignancies and respiratory, cardiovascular, liver, and kidney diseases commonly experience worse outcomes, are protected and treated from the consequences of COVID-19 disease.
- Support collaborative research and collection, and widely share the results of all the actions taken, in order to generate guidelines and recommendations relevant to each national healthcare capacity.