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Geneva, 7 May 2021

New global leadership group to tackle COVID and other public health threats

A **Public Health Leadership Coalition**, gathering world renowned public health experts, has been launched by the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) to help ensure that the global response to the COVID pandemic and other planetary health concerns is evidence-informed, equitable and effective.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the successes that scientists and public health leaders had with non-pharmacologic interventions, drug repurposing, vaccines and other public health interventions gave greater visibility to scientific work. Researchers should now use this position to advocate for policies that improve the social determinants of health and advance the cause of economic, racial and social justice. Indeed, the pandemic is far from over, and, combined with economic inequality and climate change, puts the world in the face of great challenges.

The WFPHA leadership coalition is taking the responsibility of being this strong, independent and accountable voice of the public health workforce, communities, civil societies, and scientific experts to make governments and organizations accountable for their choices. “Humanity and the planet are facing a leadership challenge; we need to form a united front to become the scientific authorities in different parts of the world” said Prof. Walter Ricciardi, WFPHA President and Coalition Chair.

“We now have the opportunity to harness the combined efforts of outstanding public health leaders to find country-specific solutions,” added Prof. Michael Moore, Chair of WFPHA International Immunization Policy Taskforce and Coalition member. “It is critical that a protection, prevention and health promotion approach be adopted, so that the health of all citizens in each country can be improved, with a particular focus on the needs of the most vulnerable and the rebuilding of trust, at all levels”.

The COVID-19 pandemic is responsible for millions of deaths worldwide and for increasing socioeconomic, ethnic and geographical inequalities between countries and in each country. A focused and organized public health effort is imperative to face this global crisis effectively. “Equity is a social value. We cannot and must not turn our backs on profound global inequalities” said Prof. Maria del Rocio Saenz, Coalition member.

“The world is experiencing a crisis of great magnitude and multiple dimensions,” said Prof Luis Eugenio de Souza, WFPHA Vice-President and Coalition member. “In this context, the Leadership Coalition is an urgent call for world leaders in different fields of activity to work together to optimize the health outcomes of the population, through an articulated set of interventions on health and its determinants, informed by the best scientific knowledge.”

The leaders of this coalition will personally get involved with their governments and key organisations acting in their regions to provide scientific advice and national, regional and international specific solutions to enable decision makers to implement the best evidence-based policies in public health and to make the right choice for the health and wealth of each country. This will be done by sharing the best evidence-based practices at

national and international level and building a strong team of public health professionals who will contribute to finding concrete and decisive solutions that will also meet the future health needs of individuals and the population as a whole, worldwide.

“More than ever, the world needs a safe space in which scientists, leaders of governments, corporations and other sectors of society could align their incentives, to turn the right decisions for all into the easiest ones to make” added Dr Alejandro Jadad, Coalition member.

“We need giants in promoting Universal Health Coverage through gender, age and racial equality advocacy. Leaders of this coalition are joining forces to promote gender equality in science, medicine, global health and leadership”, highlighted Prof Sheila Tlou, Coalition member.

The Public Health Leadership Coalition consolidates the WFPHA’s commitment to advocate for improvements in Global Public Health.

The Official launch event will be held on May 12 2021 at 13.30 CEST – [Register here](#) or follow it live @ <https://www.facebook.com/ngowfpha>

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