

International Longevity Centre Global Alliance (ILC-GA)

Position Statement on COVID-19

The ILC Global Alliance (ILC-GA) membership is regionally diverse, and its members in both the Global North and the Global South are united in their concern for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on individuals, families and communities. In particular, the Global Alliance (GA) stands in support of the most vulnerable members of society during the pandemic: older persons, persons with underlying morbidities, and members of specific ethnic and socio-economic groups. Above all, the ILC-GA members extend sympathy to all families who have lost a loved one to the virus, typically without an opportunity to bid them farewell.

As a global organisation focused on the self-actualisation and well-being of older persons, the GA's members:

- denounce ageism, age discrimination, xenophobia and other human rights violations in the management of the pandemic, and the treatment of infected and affected persons;
- eschew social redundancy of the most vulnerable and advocate for their dignity at end of life;
- urge that older persons' perspectives are taken into account in the design and implementation of Covid-19 related measures to ensure they are relevant to and respectful of their lived experiences;
- encourage appropriate physical distancing practices, foster social solidarity through actions of kindness and empathy, and embrace technology and other creative responses;
- call for effective oversight and time limitation on any suspension of civil liberties;
- support the key inter- and intra-governmental bodies to collect, disaggregate and disseminate global data on Covid-19;
- support basic and applied sciences leading to optimal testing, treatment and immunization programmes as well as enhanced public health literacy;
- acknowledge the fault lines of social inequalities brought to the fore by the pandemic, and champion their urgent amelioration through both short-term and long-term strategies;
- acknowledge the continuing contribution of older persons to family and community;
- extend gratitude to frontline workers for their selfless commitment in addressing the health, social and economic impact of the pandemic.

Finally, the members view it as of critical importance to support inter-governmental organizations in their continuing effort to provide evidence-based guidelines under the constraints imposed by declining financial resources and geopolitical agendas. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that the world must stand united, and that rights to technologies helpful to the detection, prevention, control and treatment of the pandemic must be pooled. Such commitment can be the only path to ensure equitable access to health technologies and necessary know-how, which aligns with our principles of equity and belief in a need to develop a framework for global public good at the highest level of the United Nations, including its specialized agencies. To this end we lobby all countries to support the development, approval and implementation of a United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older Persons.