

20 April 2020

**PLUS Statement on
Access to Plasma Derived Medicinal Products & home care during the COVID-19 pandemic**

The Platform of Plasma Protein Users (PLUS), a coalition of organisations representing patients with rare plasma-related disorders whose health and lives rely on a stable and diverse supply of plasma-derived medicinal products (PDMPs), calls for measures to be urgently implemented in all countries to ensure continuity of access for patients who rely on a regular and stable supply of life-enhancing and life-saving PDMPs in view of the movement restriction and confinement measures in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A range of PDMPs are used in the treatment of a number of rare plasma related disorders including among others:

- Immunoglobulin therapies available in different modes of administration (intravenous, subcutaneous and facilitated subcutaneous) used in the lifelong life-saving treatment of primary immunodeficiencies (a group of over 400 rare immune disorders), neurological indications (i.e. Guillain-Barré Syndrome, CIDP) and other immune disorders (i.e. ITP, secondary immunodeficiencies...) among others
- Clotting factor therapies used in the lifelong life-saving treatment of rare bleeding disorders (i.e. haemophilia, von Willebrand, among others)
- Alpha-1 antitrypsin augmentation therapies used in the lifelong life-saving treatment of alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency

We are calling upon relevant health authorities in the European Union and other world regions to protect the access to these life-saving treatments for our patient communities and therefore to protect their supply chain management, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Patients living with rare plasma related disorders, require regular infusions or injections of their treatments. Most patients with rare plasma related disorders are among the most vulnerable populations (i.e. immunodeficiencies, lung diseases, etc).

Depending on the type of rare plasma related disorder patients may already be on home therapy whilst others will get their treatments in hospitals or specialized centres. In many countries COVID-19 confinement, movement restriction measures and hospitals overload mean our patients are expected to stay at home for safety reasons and as per national guidelines. This is vitally important for many of

these vulnerable patients who may be at higher risk of significant morbidity or mortality if they develop SARS- Cov-2 infectionⁱ.

Whilst in some countries home therapy is accessible in others it is not. Many patients living in countries where home therapy is available may also not be on home self-treatment either because it is not yet available for their specific disorder (i.e. alpha 1 antitrypsin) or because of other reasons such as tolerability or supply considerations (i.e. a significant portion of PID patients are on intravenous immunoglobulin treatment which is usually administered in the hospital although in some countries it can be administered at home, this requires training and homecare assistance).

PLUS therefore urges all national authorities to ensure wherever and whenever possible that patients can benefit from home care. When or where not possible, their access to care should be protected by contingency measures that enable them to continue to benefit from their hospital-based treatment on a regular basis and without any interruption.

About PLUS: PLUS is a coalition of organisations which represent the views of over 110,000 patients in Europe who are regular users of plasma or plasma derived products. We represent the views of the European Haemophilia Consortium (EHC), the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH), the International Patient Organisation for Primary Immunodeficiencies (IPOPI), Alpha-1 Plus antitrypsin deficiency, the GBS/CIDP Foundation, Hereditary Angio-Oedema International (HAEI) and the ITP Support Association.

ⁱ https://www.ehc.eu/wp-content/uploads/COVID19-Recommendations-Joint-Statement_FOR-PUBLICATION_WEB-1.pdf