

Statement on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

4 March 2020

The ILAE and the IBE are keeping close surveillance of the developments with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation in the Asia-Oceania region and world-wide.

The 13th Asian & Oceanian Epilepsy Congress is due to take place in October 2020 in Fukuoka; we are still on course to hold a successful congress and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at that time.

We are monitoring the global public health environment and advice from authorities such as the World Health Organization, *[other regional/global authority]* and local health departments. The health and well-being of our delegates and stakeholders is of paramount importance to us and we are making every effort to ensure safety for everyone at our congress.

Japanese Government, where Fukuoka is placed, has done tremendous effort in last February and March to prevent the future social effects as minimum as possible, and you could obtain the information from the government in English in the following address
https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage_00032.html

We encourage all of our delegates to act responsibly and to use sound judgement in order to avoid exposure. The WHO recommends the following basic protective measures:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water; thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub where possible.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has a fever and/or cough.
- If you have a fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing, seek medical care early.

All participants should of course stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19 and follow advice given by healthcare providers and national and local public health authorities.

The 13th AOEC is still 7 months away, but we continue to review appropriate sanitary, health and other measures; we remain watchful but are committed to focusing on and preparing for a successful congress.

We look forward to seeing you at the 13th AOEC in Fukuoka in October and to another productive and educational congress. If you have any queries, please contact aoec@epilepsycongress.org.

Further information is available at <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus> and *[other websites]*.