



Statement by Patients and Patient Organizations on Reinforcing Ethics and Business Integrity in Healthcare

15 October 2020

As the common cause of every stakeholder in the health system and the ultimate consumers of health products and services, patients have the most at stake in reinforcing ethics and business integrity in healthcare.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscores the longstanding importance of maintaining patient trust and confidence in our healthcare. Patient organizations, as representatives of patients in our economies, have a vital role in partnering with diverse stakeholders to encourage ethics and business integrity in healthcare, including with governments, industry, healthcare professionals and providers. These efforts are well demonstrated through the direct participation of patient organizations in consensus frameworks for ethical collaboration, both internationally as well as within economies. Meaningful patient engagement in these efforts also helps to ensure that commitments to strengthening ethical business conduct are realized through concrete actions.

Patients and patient organizations strongly support and are active leaders in the *Business Ethics for APEC SMEs Initiative* as the world's largest public-private partnership to strengthen ethical business practices in the medical device and biopharmaceutical sectors. Patients and patient organization engagement in this initiative not only reinforces high standard business practices but also improved health systems. We strongly support this initiative's proven work to uplift thousands of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), not only because the overwhelming majority of companies operating within these sectors are SMEs, but because these enterprises are the lifeblood of innovation and delivery in the products and services that patients depend upon.

Patients and patient organizations have made tremendous contributions in the implementation of the APEC Kuala Lumpur Principles and APEC Mexico City Principles as well as in the achievement of the Nanjing Declaration's objectives from 2014 to 2020. Despite limited resources and challenging conditions amidst COVID-19, patients and patient organizations see tremendous importance in the Business Ethics for APEC SMEs Initiative as crucial to the health ecosystem. Patients and patient organizations are resolved in their commitment to realize the goals and actions of Vision 2025 and must remain at the center of the initiative's activities in the years to come.