**Roche’s response to the fight against COVID-19 in Greece**

*Putting the patients, the NHS and society at the center of what we do*

With a full sense of responsibility towards patients and the Greek society, Roche has initiated a series of actions to contribute to the efforts against the COVID-19 pandemic.

In these exceptional times, Roche is working closely with the different parties; the Ministry of health and the competent authorities, healthcare providers and all those working to overcome the pandemic by constantly seeking for ways to actively support them in any way possible.

*“At Roche in Greece, as in the other parts around the world, we are working with urgency, passion and purpose, each and every day, to improve the situation and help each other amidst an unprecedented global pandemic. To this end, we are collaborating with the Greek healthcare authorities to support front-line healthcare providers and we are continuing to help make sure that patients receive the treatment and care they need. We bravely continue to work around the clock to help ensure that patients receive our medicines and solutions when needed. There are many unknowns. But one thing is certain: we are stronger together”* said **Ezat Azem, Managing Director of Roche Hellas**.

Furthermore, **following the inclusion of tocilizumab in the treatment protocol for COVID-19 in Greece,** **Roche is working with all stakeholders in order for critically ill patients, following treating physician decision, to get the medicine.** Recently Roche announced, at a global level, the set-up of the COVACTA clinical trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of intravenous tocilizumab on top of standard of care in hospitalized adult patients with severe COVID-19 pneumonia. This is the first global study of tocilizumab in this setting. In addition to the Roche global clinical trial, Roche is also carefully following independently-led clinical trials, on multiple medicines including tocilizumab, that are taking place around the world. At the moment, there are no robust, well-controlled studies showing safety and efficacy of tocilizumab in clinical treatment of COVID-19 pneumonia and tocilizumab is not currently approved for this use.

***Standing by Greek patients and families***

Committed to Greek patients, Roche **continues to stand by patients’ associations** in Greece in these times of stress. Among others, the company supports the program **‘Together against COVID”** which is implemented in collaboration with the Greek Patients Association, aiming to provide e-education on COVID-19 related issues, advocacy consultancy and continuous support through a dedicated call center.

Roche also collaborates with Roche “Alma Zois” patient association of women with breast cancer to support **webinar education to women with breast cancer** sharing information about COVID-19 and tips to manage psychological stress through the pandemic. In collaboration with “Alma Zois“ in Patras, we also support **patients’ transportation to and forth the hospital for treatment purposes**.

In addition, in cooperation with the Hellenic Society of Medical Oncology (EOPE), Roche **supported a web-based educational program for oncologists**, regarding the COVID-19 situation.

At the same time, Roche supports and further enhances standing programs for the **home delivery of medicines where this is feasible and in therapeutic areas with high unmet medical need**.

Moreover, in an effort to support Greek families, Roche has developed a series of **short educational videos for children** staying at home that are available through the website ([www.hemilios.gr](http://www.hemilios.gr)) and a dedicated [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHTd0J40RtNON1xryrX7Viw). Featuring **“Hemilios”** as main hero, the videos provide advice and information on several health-related topics but also suggest activities to spend their free time at home while learning new things and practicing new skills!

Roche will also support an initiative by the Hellenic Liver Patient Association “Prometheus” aiming to inform **prisoners, a group at high risk from COVID-19, and prison officers** about measures against contamination, and also provide them with personal hygiene products.

*“At Roche we always put patients, the healthcare system and society at the center of what we do - especially at times of healthcare emergencies, To this end we are working intensely to find ways to support the emerging needs of patients and vulnerable groups by partnering with local patient organisations, NGOS, and scientific societies - thus combining efforts, ideas and our passion to support our communities”* stated **Anna Papakosmopoulou, Communications Value Lead and Spokesperson.**

***Protecting the safety of all, while ensuring supply***

Since the beginning of the crisis, Roche has been focused on protecting the safety of its employees, their families and the society at large, while ensuring at the same time the uninterrupted supply of its medicines and diagnostic solutions to the Greek patients.

To this end the company applied at an early stage social distancing measures, including the elimination of field-based activities and domestic and international travelling, the cancellation of organization and participation in events and working from home for all employees. Moreover, during this period, it is securing all job positions and extending employment contracts of definite period until the end of June, while continuing normally its hiring processes.

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