Dear delegate,

We appreciate there is some concern around the impact of COVID-19 on international events, we therefore write to you to provide an update on the current situation in relation to the the World Public Health Nutrition (WPHN) Congress 2020.

COVID-19

We have been monitoring the developing situation of COVID-19 and are in regular contact with the Australian Department of Health on their update on the virus and potential impact to Australian and in turn large international events.
In relation to the risk in Australia, the Australian quarantine procedures are among the strictest in the world. Australian borders have been closed or restricted since 1 Feb to anyone having been in China within 2 weeks. It looks like this may soon be extended to Korea and to other countries with significant outbreaks.

It is important to understand that, as of 27 February, there have been 23 cases diagnosed in Australia, of which 8 have been in Queensland, the host state for the conference. 5 cases were from a tour group originating in Wuhan, China, three cases were from the Diamond Princess cruise ship group evacuated from Darwin for treatment in Queensland Hospitals. There have been no deaths from coronavirus recorded in Australia and the majority of cases are now deemed as recovered.

We understand that our Border force is monitoring for anyone arriving with symptoms and testing for the virus. People becoming ill after arrival are asked to seek assistance immediately. At this stage, we have no reports of individuals becoming infected in Australia, although some 23 citizens are in quarantine, having contracted the virus overseas.

The Australian government are monitoring the situation and provide briefings at the following websites:


We are aware that significant international conferences such as the Micronutrients Conference in Bangkok next month have been postponed. This is understandable given the number of cases reported in that region. International trade events and other business events cancelled in Australia due to stated concern about the virus were on the whole expecting large attendances from countries with high infection rates.

It is still a month out from the WPHN Congress. The Public Health Association of Australian (PHAA) and World Public Health Nutrition Association (WPHNA) are of the view that we should proceed at this stage. We appreciate the situation is evolving and that a prediction of how the virus situation will
develop is not possible, however until advised by our health authorities there is no reason to postpone or cancel the Congress at this stage.

**Travel Insurance**

We encourage all delegates to consider travel insurance in attending any event, whether national or international. Travel insurance is the responsibility of delegates to arrange on their own. The policy should include loss of fees through cancellation of your participation or through cancellation of the event itself, loss of airfares for any reason, medical expenses, loss or damage to personal property, additional expenses and repatriation should travel arrangements have to be altered. The conference does not endorse or have any arrangements with any companies.

Please be aware of the registration terms and conditions agreed to when registering for the WPHN Congress 2020 around cancelling your attendance. A copy of the terms and conditions can be viewed [here](#).

We will continue to keep a watching brief. We can assure you that we will act on the advice of our health authorities and keep our delegates informed of any new developments. It is likely we will be in touch again before the Congress with any updates.

We look forward to welcoming you to the WPHN Congress being held in Brisbane, Australia from Tuesday 31 March to Thursday 2 April 2020.

Kind regards,

**Ms Margaret Miller**  
President, WPHNA

**Adjunct Professor Terry Slevin**  
CEO, PHAA