

# MANIFESTO



## World Lymphedema Day

March 6<sup>th</sup> - 2020

- Lymphedema is a global health problem that affects more than 250 million people worldwide, women, men and children of all nationalities and populations.
- Lymphedema is a chronic and progressive disease of the lymphatic system that can cause severe deformity, disability and life-threatening complications, which can also cause psychological and economic burdens.
- Many health professionals are not fully aware of the disease, its signs and symptoms, causing people with lymphedema to suffer for many years before they obtain a diagnosis and begin treatment.
- There remains low public awareness and understanding of lymphatic diseases and health effects relative to its significant impact on the lives of people with lymphoedema.
- People with lymphedema need access to high-quality multidisciplinary specialised centers, with experienced health professionals, in order to receive appropriate treatment, including psychological and social care.
- There is a deep, unmet need worldwide to educate and support individuals affected by lymphedema, including their family members and caregivers, on basic self-management.
- Medical research efforts to find a cure for lymphedema and to improve treatments are lacking sufficient funding, in comparison with diseases of similar magnitude and severity.

Therefore, we support March 6 as World Lymphedema Day and the patient associations signing below call for the attention of politicians, policy makers, health care professionals, researchers and the general public towards the needs of those who live with, or who are at risk of developing, lymphedema. We ask for increased funding for medical research, educational programs for healthcare professionals, and improved access to specialised care for those living with lymphedema.

