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PolioPlus responding to COVID-19

1 message

DG Johnny Moore <mailservice@dacdb.net>
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To: lindsaysutcliffe2@gmail.com

Thu, Apr 9, 2020 at 4:20 PM

Dear Lindsay,

The following came from our Zone 33 PolioPlus Chair Rocky Jacobs and from Rotary International. Because of its significance it is being distributed to all Rotarians in District 7770. This is powerful!

Beginning forward:

Chuck and I want to thank you very much for the work you have done so far this Rotary year to ensure that Rotary meets the commitment it made four decades ago to the mothers and children of the world to eradicate the wild polio virus from their daily lives. At that time, Chuck and I were members of the same Rotary club in Springfield Virginia. Our club leadership took up that challenge and our members very graciously supported the first polio fundraising campaign. And, that club has continued, as have most of your clubs, to support Rotary and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative through the many years this humanitarian program has been a Number 1 humanitarian priority of Rotary.

We have had our "ups and downs" as we have pursued our objective over the years, but we have continued to make progress, although slow at times, with your dedication and efforts. Today we are facing another challenge...the global Covid-19 pandemic. As with other world health challenges through this period, Rotary has taken a "pause" and assisted with the challenge. Please read the below article written by Mike McGovern, Chair of the Rotary International PolioPlus Committee, and John Germ, Past Rotary International President and Chair of the Polio Countdown to History Committee. We know that regular club meetings and club fundraisers are not the "norm" at this time, but that doesn't mean Rotary doesn't need our club members and our club and district leadership to keep on addressing the financial needs of Rotary's PolioPlus program at this time so we can continue to assist with polio and this world-wide health challenge as described in Mike and John's article.

Again, many thanks!

Chuck and Rocky

Begin quote:

"PolioPlus Responding to the Covid-19 Challenge"

By Mike McGovern, Chair of the Rotary International PolioPlus Committee and John Germ, Past Rotary International President and Chair of the Polio Countdown to History Committee

"A program begun by Rotary is employing thousands of health workers to address the Covid-19 pandemic. The program is the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) which includes Rotary's PolioPlus program. From the earliest days of polio eradication in the Philippines, the generosity and advocacy of Rotarians and our partners has nearly stopped polio, stopped Ebola from becoming an epidemic in Nigeria and now responds to Covid-19.

"Over the next four to six months the polio program is offering its tools, workforce and extensive surveillance network to support countries as they respond. Globally, the polio surveillance network is being trained on Covid case detection, contact tracing, laboratory testing and data management. GPEI is deploying its coordination mechanisms

such as emergency operations centers and sharing physical assets like vehicles, computers and mobile phones to combat the pandemic. In Nigeria, an extensive network of polio communication assets including 20,000 volunteer community mobilizers are working across the country to promote handwashing to reduce transmission. In Pakistan, polio staff have sensitized more than 6,000 health workers on Covid-19 and repurposed a helpline originally used for polio related calls to also address Covid questions. The polio surveillance team in Angola is training health care staff on case management of Covid-19. Polio staff in Benin are developing a pandemic preparedness plan for that country. Each day we hear of more deployments of polio staff to address Covid issues in additional countries.

"So what about polio itself? The Polio Oversight Board made the hard decision to pause house to house vaccinations knowing that this may lead to an increase in polio cases. Polio surveillance will continue while also supporting Covid surveillance. The GPEI is working to ensure that once it is safe to do so, countries can be supported to rapidly resume polio immunization campaigns. We will have a message in every country that vaccines, including the polio vaccine, stop viruses from attacking children and adults. We must seize the moment to let every village understand that the polio vaccine saves lives.

"For over 40 years, Rotarians have never wavered in fulfilling our commitment to the children of the world to end polio. Today, in contributing to PolioPlus we are also addressing this evil Covid-19 pandemic. The goals this year for contributions to PolioPlus have not changed. The opportunity to do good in the world has only increased. If you or your club have not given to PolioPlus lately, today is the day to do so. All funds donated are matched 2 to 1 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. If your District has underutilized District Designated Funds, any allocation is matched 6 to 1 by The Rotary Foundation World Fund and the Gates Foundation. And if you want to know more about how Rotary and the GPEI are addressing Covid-19 while not losing focus on eradicating polio, see [Polioeradication.org](https://polioeradication.org) and endpolio.org"

End quote.

Let's do all we can to help in this very uncertain time!

Stay safe, live well and serve others,

Johnny Moore
District 7770
District Governor 2019-2020



Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change - across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves.

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