



## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: COVID-19 AND APSS PARTICIPATION IN SPINEWEEK 2020

Dear APSS Members, SpineWeek 2020 – APSS Faculty and Free Papers Presenters,

As per [SpineWeek 2020 latest statement](#) dated 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the SpineWeek Committee has opted to proceed with the organisation of SpineWeek 2020 in Melbourne scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

APSS leadership has been constantly monitoring the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) since the outbreak has started. The APSS Executive Committee (EXCO) has made the difficult decision to withdraw its participation in SpineWeek 2020 based on the latest scientific data being reported, and the health impact derived from a large number of international attendees at this meeting. Another important factor in the decision making was the diminished quality of the programme due to absence of the international faculty members of APSS. The Faculty of APSS programme in SpineWeek 2020 are coming from the Asia Pacific region including Australia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Philippines, where the number of cases has increased drastically over the past few weeks, and there has been travelling restrictions and leave suspension imposed by their employers until further notice.

Therefore, we would like to apologise for the withdrawal, especially to those who have been supporting the APSS and are looking forward to attending the scientific programme of the APSS. You may still attend SpineWeek 2020 at your own free will. If you are attending SpineWeek 2020 and have an accepted paper by the APSS, the APSS has requested the SpineWeek Committee to consider rearranging the free paper presentations schedule in SpineWeek 2020. Kindly please liaise with the SpineWeek 2020 to confirm the arrangement, and please note that this is subject to the discretion of SpineWeek Committee.

For those who have registered under APSS and are considering their options, you are advised to visit [SpineWeek website](#) to check the updated cancellation policy. Kindly be reminded that the deadline for cancellation with refund option (less € 100 administration fee) is on the **10<sup>th</sup> of March 2020**. Should you wish to cancel your registration and receive a refund, please contact [astrid@medicongress.com](mailto:astrid@medicongress.com), with a copy of email to [spine@apssonline.org](mailto:spine@apssonline.org).

It is with deep regret that APSS will not be participating in SpineWeek 2020. We recognize that the timing of this decision has significantly inconvenienced many of you. However, this decision was made out of deep concern for the health and well-being of our members, and we strongly believe this is the right decision given the current circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

Keith DK Luk  
President of Asia Pacific Spine Society