

## In the midst of a pandemic

I sincerely hope that you and your close ones are keeping well!

During the last three months, almost everything has circled around the coronavirus. The pandemic is a challenge for us all, as are the measurements put in place by governments all over the world, unheard of in times of peace.

In this serious situation community pharmacists are at the frontline; every day they risk meeting infected people, and at the same time protective equipment is scarce. Community pharmacists of course are not the only pharmacists of importance in the fight against COVID-19. At the same time, we are looking to pharmacists and other scientists in academia and industry to develop new treatments and vaccines, as many experts believe that a vaccine is necessary to curb the pandemic. With many countries introducing lock-downs and travel restrictions the global network for manufacturing and delivering medicines is of course affected and as a consequence the pharmaceutical industry faces a major challenge to secure deliveries of medicines, also for all other diseases that unfortunately do not cease to exist during the pandemic.

In my function as President of the Swedish Pharmacists Association I recently had a meeting with our Minister of Health and Social Affairs. She had three key points on the agenda; How can we secure uninterrupted supply of medicines, how can we ensure that pharmacies remain open throughout the country, and how can we ensure that we have pharmacists to run these pharmacies. The first is problematic as more and more countries close their borders and restrict exports. The second one is relatively easy but depends on



the third as of course having enough pharmacists is a challenge as many of them are, or risk becoming, infected by the virus. But in this time of crisis unexpected events take place; We currently receive 20-30 calls each day from retired pharmacists, industry pharmacists, students, etc. who say that they want to help and offer to work in any community pharmacy. This is fantastic news and to me it shows the strong

professional ethics and morals of pharmacists.

In this issue of *Industrial Pharmacy*, you will find several articles related to coronavirus. You can also find a wealth of information on COVID-19 on the website of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), [www.fip.org](http://www.fip.org). At the global level FIP is doing a tremendous job in putting together recommendations and collecting information on what is done in different countries and what can be done, to function as a repository for guidance and for ideas. Following the impressive work of the COVID-19 Guidance Task Force a COVID-19 Expert Advisory Group has recently been established that will be able to advise on many different aspects of the pandemic. As this year's annual congress (Seville, Spain) has been postponed until next year, the website is an excellent way to keep up to date.

Enjoy reading and stay safe!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ulf Janson'.

Ulf Janson  
President, Industrial Pharmacy Section (IPS)