MEP Lung Health Group

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When we are healthy, we take our breathing for granted, never fully appreciating that our lungs are essential organs for life and that every breath counts. But when our lung health is impaired, nothing else but our breathing really matters. The lungs are the only internal organ constantly exposed to the external environment, making them vulnerable to airborne infection and injury.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, respiratory diseases represented an enormous and increasing healthcare and economic burden across Europe, with over 600,000 deaths a year and six million hospital admissions and total costs exceeding €380 billion per year [1]. The pandemic has increased this burden and it has shown more than ever the need to promote healthy lungs for life.

Co-chaired by Manuel Pizarro (S&D) and Željana Zovko (EPP), the MEP lung health group in the European Parliament is a group of MEPs interested in exploring the legislative and non-legislative measures that can be taken at the European level to promote lung health and tackle respiratory disease.

The secretariat of the group is supported by the European Respiratory Society and the European Lung Foundation and together with other partners, we promote lung health through the development of legislation and policies to prevent and tackle respiratory disease.

The Group aims to:

- Maintain a forum for discussion and action with all stakeholders in respiratory health.
- Be a focal point for MEPs and organisations interested in what is currently the most prevalent respiratory disease: COVID-19.
- Advocate for patients suffering the burden of chronic and infectious respiratory disease.
- Promote a greater understanding of respiratory health, its risk factors and tangible prevention measures.
- Translate this dialogue into policy input across diverse areas such as health, research, environment, tobacco control, housing, energy, transport, air quality and occupational exposures.
- Focus on increasing funding for basic and translational research.
- Ensure access to lung health care is available for all citizens across Europe.