



Hafnarfjordur Iceland, December 20th.2020.

World Ostomy Day 2021

Since 1993 the World Ostomy Day WOD is celebrated every three years on the first Saturday in October. In 2021 we can celebrate a special anniversary: It's the 10th WOD and it again will unify ostomates and IOA member associations in the whole world.

For each WOD another of the three IOA regions takes the responsibility. This time the motto of WOD 2021 has been brought up by the European Ostomy Association EOA. The motto is:

“Ostomates’ Rights are Human Rights – anytime and anywhere!”

Why has EOA EC chosen this motto among nine different proposals?

The “Charter of Ostomates Rights”, issued in its first version by the IOA Coordination Committee 1993, defines the needs and the care of ostomates to live a life in dignity. It is necessary that ostomates receive the information and care which will enable them to live a self-determined and independent life and to participate in all decision making processes.

In 2020 and presumably also in 2021 people in nearly the whole world faced the threat of the SARS-Cov2-virus (Covid-19) and its consequences for the health and the daily life. We know that many activities of ostomy associations couldn't be continued in the usual way. Chapter meetings with personal contacts couldn't take place, the visiting service in hospitals had to be stopped in most cases. Conferences and congresses had been cancelled or postponed. Often the personal care by stoma nurses at home in the first time after surgery had been reduced. And we even heard about problems in some countries where the resources of the health system had been concentrated on Covid-19. The access to affordable appliances had been limited, a very big challenge for ostomates and the ostomy associations.

In these times it is one of our great concerns to put the focus on the Charter of Ostomates Rights: The defined needs and care are not anything at all! They describe necessary needs of a special group of disabled people. The rights of disabled people are an own right and all these rights are Human Rights. Disabled people matter, ostomates matter!

So with the WOD motto 2021 we will underline that Ostomates Rights are not negotiable. They must be respected by governments, politicians, healthcare authorities, companies and suppliers, by doctors and nurses, by every human and by every society – even in uncertain times.

On behalf of EOA,

Jon Thorkelsson.