

## **Counter Measures against Covid-19**

Since the end of 2019 Pakistan and the whole world has been facing the pandemic, Covid –19. A novel coronavirus outbreak was first observed in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. It has now been in 220 countries of the world. It has world widely affected, 205,787,397 human being and death toll of COVID-19 has reached 4,341,787. Now along with many other countries of the world we have been facing the fourth wave of Covid – 19.

The pandemic reached Pakistan in February 2020. The first two cases of COVID-19 were confirmed by Health Authorities on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Both patients had history of travelling to Iran. Till March 12 the tally of the Coronavirus patients reached to 21, all having history of travelling abroad. The first case of local transmission was reported on 13<sup>th</sup> March in Karachi. Now till August 12, 2021, the tally of the total confirmed cases in Pakistan has reached to 1,085,294 and the death toll is 24,187.

Pakistan Medical Association has always played its due role during the natural disasters like floods, earthquakes and epidemics. In this regard PMA was the first to sniff out the difficulties Pakistan is going to face due to the spread of pandemic in coming days.

PMA suggested the government to take following counter measures against covid-19;

- 1 - Install thermal scanners at our International Airports and at every entry points of our international borders to scan the passengers arriving from high risk countries.
- 2 - Establish quarantine facilities at airports and border entries to quarantine the people found with symptoms for two weeks.
- 3 - If somebody is found positive for coronavirus we should have Isolation facilities in the country to keep and treat the patients.
- 4 – Allocate sufficient funds for Covid-19 to strengthen the health delivery system
- 5 – If Cases are increasing rapidly then impose lockdown
- 6 – If the number of cases has declined then lockdown could be relaxed with implementation of strict SOPs.
- 7 – Testing capacity (PCR) should be enhanced.
- 8 - There should be a clear dashboard or a central helpline from the governments in all major cities, to guide patients where to contact if they are sick. Only announcing designated hospitals does not help as it leads to frustration in finding a place by the sick. This helpline should be available to ambulance services so that the ambulance driver should know where to drop the patient.

9 - There should be a strategy to protect the healthcare workers. Uninterrupted supply of PPEs should be maintained. Screening of healthcare workers should be mandatory to avoid co-workers, their families and others from risks. Duty hours of healthcare workers serving at corona wards should be minimized.

10 – Shaheed Package (support money) for the families of those medics who have lost their lives while fighting against Covid-19.

11 – Close coordination with international health organizations like WHO, UNICEF, WMA, and with regional organizations to get benefit of their research and experiences.

12 – Government should strictly implement the SOPs to avoid spread of Covid-19.

13 - Treatment of all corona patients should be free of cost even at private hospitals with consultation of hospitals management.

14 - We believe that Government should make a uniform policy with the consultation of all political parties and other stakeholders to curtail Coronavirus in the country and make legislation for implementation of SOPs.

15- Covid-19 Vaccine;

(a) :The government should expedite the process of acquiring vaccine for Covid-19.

(b): Healthcare Workers both from public and private sector should be administered vaccine on priority basis.

(c): People above the age of sixty suffering from Diabetes, Hypertension, Cancer or any other uncompromised diseases / Drugs should also be vaccinated on priority basis.

(d): People above seventy with no diseases should also be vaccinated on priority basis.

(e): Public awareness campaign for this vaccine should also be launched through media to prepare people to get vaccinated and to rule out all miss concepts regarding corona vaccine

(f): Provide free vaccine to the whole population in the country.

(g) : PMA advised the government to increase the vaccination facilities to vaccinate more people in shorter time. At least 70 -75% of population of Pakistan should be vaccinated as early as possible.

**PMA, s suggestions for public to avoid Coronavirus;**

1. Avoid going in crowds.
2. Always wear mask whenever you go out.
3. Wash your hands with soap or Sanitize regularly.
4. Try to avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
5. Use tissue papers to clean your nose and dispose off it properly. You can also use your arm rather than hands for covering your cough and sneeze.
6. Avoid sneezing and coughing openly.
7. Do not share your paraphernalia like glass, plate, cup, towel, mobile, pen etc.
8. Remember when you feel difficulty in breathing while you are in isolation or in quarantine please contact immediately to the hospital.
9. This is new viral disease, do not involve in self medication practice. Always follow the advice of qualified doctors.
10. Do not involve in any unscientific treatment.
11. Get vaccinated as early as possible.

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