

Confederation of Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania

**CMAAO Taipei Statement on Collaborative Work for
Managing Novel Pathogen Pandemic**

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Over the past centuries, human beings have overcome poverty, famine and war to evolve into modern society. The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003, H1N1 in 2008, Ebola in 2014, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate that emerging infectious diseases have overtaken nuclear weapons as the most lethal threats to the whole world.

As key guardians of healthcare, physicians play pivotal roles in containing and mitigating the spread of infection to preserve the wellbeing of the whole society. Establishing an effective medical system enables infectious cases to be managed and contained at the community level and may prevent overwhelming of the healthcare system. National medical associations and the government have respective important functions and roles in a pandemic and should collaborate to mount a coherent and effective response.

This Statement calls for a collaborative work of all parties involved for preventing and managing novel infectious diseases in all aspects, and hopefully curbing the pandemic nowadays.

Preparation of primary health care physicians

- Preparation before a pandemic
 1. Clinics should stock Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in preparation for a pandemic.
 2. Physicians should receive continuing education and training in pandemic prevention and infectious diseases.
- Response to a pandemic and spreading
 1. Implement history taking with Travel history, Occupation history, Contact history, Cluster of infections (TOCC) and report suspected cases expediently.
 - Provide timely and relevant public health information to the public and minister to the psychological welfare of the public.
 2. Keep close contact with Medical Association, report demand/shortage of PPE and medical information relevant to the pandemic.
 3. Refer to the successful models that proved effective in diagnosing patients and contact tracing sources of infection, in which big data and medical information

technology are applied.

4. When the number of cases increases rapidly, primary health care physicians should immediately upgrade PPE and reinforce the integration and coordination with designated medical institutions.

Establishment of a tiered medical system

Primary health care

- Response to a pandemic and spreading
 1. Provide primary health care infrastructure for community surveillance and referral of suspected cases.
 2. Provide remote medical consultation and monitoring of physical condition for persons quarantined at homes.
 3. Prepared clinics with ample support should be capable of handling suspected mild cases and provide referrals to secondary and tertiary care centers as required.
 4. When the number of cases increases rapidly, primary health care providers should be capable of handling suspected or confirmed mild cases, and consider telemedicine if the option is viable.
 5. Telemedicine could be considered to be temporarily employed by general clinics for the management of chronic illness and in the purpose of reducing the risk of disease, but should follow the World Medical Association Statement on the Ethics of Telemedicine and the relevant laws in their country.

Medical centers/Designated hospitals

- Preparation before a pandemic
 1. Safety stock of PPE.
 2. Establish clear work flows in infection control planning.
 3. Preparation of intensive care unit and emergency equipment.
- Response to a pandemic and spreading
 1. Accept referrals and provide care of patients with confirmed diagnosis requiring hospitalization and quarantine.
 2. Maintain medical care capacity, reduce non-essential and non-urgent operations and treatments to reduce the strain on the healthcare system and to prepare for potential surges.
 3. When the number of cases increases rapidly, redesign facility layout to admit more confirmed patients with severe conditions.

Engaging medical education-undergraduate and post-graduate

- Response to a pandemic and spreading
 1. Develop updated online courses to deliver effective medical knowledge and clinical skills for better patient care.
 2. Select a secure online teaching platform; work closely with the information technology team to provide rapid and appropriate technical support.
 3. In areas where schools had to be closed, reassessment and planning are needed to resume students' education by reopening campuses in a controlled manner, and take additional measures in response to the pandemic, such as restricting large-scale gathering activities on campus, quarantining international students, and empowering students to self-monitor their health conditions.
- Actions during the convalescence phase of a pandemic
 1. Re-examine the core competencies of Post-Graduate Year (PGY) training, ensure training of emerging infectious disease care is tightly integrated.
 2. Integrate community resources; bring the ideas of community health building and community-oriented primary health care into medical education of medical students and continuing education of physicians.
 3. Develop interprofessional education and teacher education to cope with the comprehensive impact of emerging infectious diseases.

Role of National Medical Association

Close cooperation between the National Medical Association and the national health authorities is key to successful prevention and control of a pandemic.

- Preparation before a pandemic

Assist the national health authorities in continuous monitoring of pandemic and formulation of case-reporting conditions.
- Response to a pandemic and spreading
 1. Assist the national health authorities to distribute PPE in feasible and effective way to increase the coverage rate.
 2. Help healthcare facilities, including medical centers, hospitals, and primary care providers to compensate for the increased expense to control the pandemics.
 3. Coordinate with the donation of medical supplies from local organizations and distribute them according to the need of community hospitals.
 4. Strengthen the public outreach of clinical monitoring in each community; formulate a tiered system customized for the community.
 5. Timely release of accurate pandemic information to calm the general public and stop spreading of rumors and misinformation.
 6. Strengthen international communications, share experience of pandemic

prevention and promote exchange of PPE.

7. When the number of cases increases rapidly, National Medical Association should help coordinate with government to seek a balance between fundamental rights of medical personnel and wellness of the society.
8. Promote and coordinate necessary clinical research activities through national research organizations to provide the necessary timely preliminary answers in a new pandemic.
9. Promote and coordinate necessary activities through professional bodies to provide guidelines for treatment in a new pandemic.
10. To promote vaccine awareness to the population through education and to combat vaccine hesitancy.

Role of the government

- Preparation before a pandemic
 1. Establish a crisis management plan to strengthen the ability of healthcare delivering and crisis monitoring.
 2. Establish a tiered medical system.
- Response to a pandemic and spreading
 1. Promptly set up a command center in charge of overall decision-making and action command of crisis situation to grasp the latest development of the pandemic.
 2. Actively facilitate the development of test methods and vaccines. To promote vaccine coverage, to enable the population to attain herd immunity.
 3. Establish a spokesperson system and standard operating procedure for media press release.
 4. Share and exchange the experiences across countries regarding pandemic prevention. Establish joint prevention of regional alliance.
 5. When the number of cases increases rapidly, the government should make reasonable use of resources and give priority to the first-line health care providers.
 6. The government must take measures to ensure that all frontline healthcare workers must be protected from infection. These measures include effective and updated communication, alternative accommodation, stipulated protected working hours as well as personal protection equipment.
- Actions during the convalescence phase of a pandemic
 1. Begin rehabilitation and restoration.
 2. Conduct systematic reviews of the pandemic on actions taken, collaborations, outcome assessments, and encourage publications of research findings.
 3. Grant funding for health care providers.
 4. Consider measures, financial or otherwise, to assist and rehabilitate those who

had been infected, those with physical or mental sequelae of the infection, and the loved ones those who died during pandemic.