

An Outbreak of COVID-19 in a Hospital and Affiliated Nursing Home in Central Taiwan, 2021

Chih-Kai Chang^{1*}, Kung-Ching Wang¹, Du-Ling Lin¹, Pei-Fang Lai²,
Ching-Fen Ko¹, Jhy-Wen Wu¹

Abstract

On June 1, 2021, Taiwan Centers for Disease Control was notified of a confirmed COVID-19 case. The patient was a resident of a nursing home located on the third floor of a hospital. On the following day, two other confirmed cases were diagnosed, including one patient and one medical staff in the 6th-floor ward of the hospital. In order to control the outbreak, all hospital staff received COVID-19 PCR tests, and discharged patients were followed. A total of 17 confirmed cases were identified in this outbreak, including two residents of the nursing home, one medical staff, seven inpatients, and seven caregivers in the 6th-floor ward. SARS-CoV-2 RNA was detected in the environmental samples of the nursing home and the 6th-floor ward. We could not identify the infection source of the index case, while the cases in the 6th-floor ward were related to their contact history or environmental exposure. We recommended that when a COVID-19 cluster occurs in a hospital, it is necessary to track the discharged patients as soon as possible. If a hospital lacks sufficient manpower despite applying a backup manpower plan and stopping non-emergent services, medical staff may return to work if they wear appropriate protective equipment and receive regular COVID-19 testing. In addition, enhancing disinfection of frequently touching surfaces is necessary to reduce the possibility of SARS-CoV-2 transmission through virus-contaminated environments.

Keywords: COVID-19, outbreak, hospital, nursing home

¹Central Regional Center, Centers for Disease Control, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Taiwan

²Division of Chronic Infectious Diseases, Centers for Disease Control, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Taiwan
DOI: 10.6525/TEB.202308_39(15).0001

Corresponding author: Chih-Kai Chang^{1*}

E-mail: akie@cdc.gov.tw

Received: Dec. 21, 2022

Accepted: Jun. 13, 2023