

Preparedness and Contingency Responses of Healthcare System to COVID-19 in Taiwan, 2020

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Abstract

The outbreak of pneumonia caused by novel coronavirus in Wuhan, China began at the end of 2019. World Health Organization named the virus as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Afterwards, the pandemic of COVID-19 hit countries worldwide and outbreaks of healthcare-associated infection occurred. The pandemic of COVID-19 is a rigorous challenge to public health and healthcare system in Taiwan. To strengthen the preparedness and response capacity of healthcare system, Taiwan developed 10 contingency strategies for healthcare facilities, long-term care facilities, and laboratories, to reach three major goals: “mitigation of the transmission”, “maintenance of the healthcare system operation”, and “reduction of severe and death cases”. The 10 contingency strategies included: (1) strengthening infection control and biosafety; (2) conducting un-notified on-site inspections and drills on medical responses; (3) tracing and identifying persons at-risk via National Health Insurance database; (4) implementing patient triage and decentralizing in-patients; (5) preparing response hospitals and designated wards; (6) constructing national testing networks; (7) monitoring capacity of healthcare system; (8) expanding capacity of quarantine places; (9) managing visitors to hospitals; and (10) monitoring health status of healthcare workers.

Keywords: Coronavirus disease 2019, healthcare facilities, long-term care facilities, contingency responses, infection control

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