

Establish an integrated information system model for emerging infectious disease outbreaks-- using SARS as an example

Abstract:

This study attempted to set up a new data set about severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)- the outbreak in Taiwan at period of March-July in 2003. We adopted data as the National Notifiable SARS Surveillance System, and linked up the clinical data provided by hospitals. The SARS Minimum data set includes 664 probable cases, and has 67 columns. The data set increases 19 columns compared with the data set of the National Notifiable SARS Surveillance System. We also try to compute the SARS attack rate of health worker in the hospitals in Taiwan. Its SARS attack rate is 2.37%.

The other topic part is law issues. This topic is a longitudinal retrospective study on the issues of current and previous legal systems of designating, adjusting and revising the diseases and its categories on the Communicable Disease Control Act, such as the category 4 communicable diseases, designated communicable diseases and emerging infectious diseases.

In accordance with the Act, the central competent authority could announce new legal infectious diseases or include those diseases to relevant provision by the legal procedure of legislation or law amendment. Once a disease has been recruited or its category has been adjusted, not only the measures of disease prevention and control, such as case reporting, isolation, management of patients and the subsidy, reward or punishment of related person, may be different to the previous regulation, but also with deep influence or limitation to human rights and freedom, so the decision making of designation, revision, re-categorization or abolition of a legal infectious disease is crucial to both of the publics and administrative organizations. We conclude that the central competent authority should set up a advisory committee, consisting of relevant experts, public figures and representatives of administrative organizations, in responsible to suggestion providing for the policy making on designating, adjusting and revising legal infectious diseases and its categories, in order to maintain the public health security, simultaneously gives protection of legal rights to patients infected by communicable diseases.