COVID-19 RESPONSE
Republic of Korea

Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency
Lessons Learned during MERS Outbreak in 2015

Recommendations from WHO-ROK Joint Mission on MERS outbreak in 2015

- Early identification and monitoring of all contacts
- Regular provision of information to the public and prompt information sharing
- Strengthening capacity of medical facilities and laboratory, and training of experts for infection prevention & control

<Core elements of APSED* III>
* Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases and Public Health Emergencies
Lessons Learned during MERS Outbreak in 2015

Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response

- Smart quarantine (Entry Screening)
- EOC, 24hrs/7days
- Field response team
- Risk communication (Dedicated department/officer)

- Introduced

- Expanded
  - Negative pressure rooms
  - FETP and Qualified ICP staff
  - Inpatient rooms (under 4 patients)
  - Comprehensive nursing services

Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency
Overview of COVID-19 in South Korea

Since the first COVID-19 case in Korea (1st Jan 2020), 375,464 cases in total confirmed (5th Nov 2021)
⇒ 360,270 cases locally transmitted (96.0%); and 15,194 cases imported (4.0%)

Death cases in total (cumulative): 2,936; and fatality rate: 0.78%

*Locally transmitted cases: Since the 2nd week of July 2021, more than 1.000 daily confirmed cases are being reported

⇒ The recent average of daily confirmed cases at the 2000 mark (30th Oct 2021 to 5th Nov 2021)

*Imported cases: Through management of foreign arrivals by risk of each country, daily imported cases are being controlled at the average 20 mark or under

COVID-19 Curve in Korea (As of 5th Nov 2021.)

- 1st Wave (18th Feb 2020 to 5th May 2020)
  - 11,000 cumulative cases
  - Cluster infections: Daegu and Gyeongbuk

- 2nd Wave (12th Aug 2020 to 12th Nov 2020)
  - 45,000 cumulative cases
  - Cluster infections: church, nursing facilities, correctional facilities, etc.
  - 13,000 cumulative cases
  - Cluster infections: downtown rally

- 3rd Wave (13th Nov 2020 to 20th Jan 2021)

- 4th Wave (7th July 2021 to the present)
  - 213,000 cumulative cases
  - Confirmed cases being increased by earlier confirmed cases
Covid-19 Responses: Testing

- Around 630 Covid-19 screening clinics/testing centers are available nationwide to collect samples for Covid-19 PCR tests.

- For early detection of asymptomatic infections, around 200 interim Covid-19 test stations are available in easily accessible locations such as city squares, subway stations, parks, etc. (143 stations in the Seoul Metropolitan Area, 57 stations in other areas)

- Drive-through and walk-through testing facilities are available
## Covid-19 Responses : Testing

### Daily Tests & Confirmed Cases

(As of 30 Oct. 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>11.23.</th>
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<th>11.25.</th>
<th>11.26.</th>
<th>11.27.</th>
<th>11.28.</th>
<th>11.29.</th>
<th>Weekly total</th>
<th>Cumulative total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of tests</td>
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<td>522,282</td>
<td>450,494</td>
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<td>509,897</td>
<td>294,276</td>
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<td>2,653,461</td>
<td>92,386,499</td>
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<td>Number of confirmed cases</td>
<td>2,698</td>
<td>4,115</td>
<td>3,938</td>
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<td>3,925</td>
<td>3,309</td>
<td>25,951</td>
<td>444,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Testing laboratories**
- **Maximum testing capacity per day**

[Graph and additional information]

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Covid-19 Responses : Testing

Daily Tests & Confirmed Cases

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Cumulative total: 92,386,499
Covid-19 Responses: Tracing

**Rapid Response Team (RRT)**
- RRT dispatched to the ground and contain the area
- Joint response of epidemiological officers from KDCA and local authorities
- Quick analysis of source of infection and close contacts \(\Rightarrow\) Preventing chain of transmission to bigger cluster

**Using Epidemiological Investigation Support System (EISS)**
- Establishing ‘COVID-19 EISS’
  \(\Rightarrow\) A source of contact tracing based on big data
Covid-19 Responses: Tracing

Data flow on the Epidemic Investigation support system (EISS)
Covid-19 Responses: Treatment

Treatment and Patient Care

Classification

- Critical
- Severe
- Moderate
- Mild/Asymptomatic

Treatment and Care

- Nationally designated isolation units
- Infectious disease specialized hospitals
- General hospitals
- Home isolation / Residential treatment centers
Covid-19 Responses: Governance & Communication

Governance: Interministerial/Central-regional governments

- Central Safety Management Committee
  - Head: Prime Minister

- Safety Policy Review Committee
  - Head: Minister of the Interior and Safety

- Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters
  - Head: Prime Minister
  - Deputy Head: Minister of the Interior and Safety

- Central Emergency Rescue Control Headquarters
  - National Fire Agency
  - Coast Guard

- Central Disaster Management Headquarters
  - Minister of Health and Welfare
  - (Risk levels: Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 [Highest])

- Central Disease Control Headquarters
  - Director of KCDC
  - (Risk levels: Level 1, Level 2)

- Ministries and Agencies

- City/Province or City/County/District Emergency Rescue Control Headquarters
  - National Fire Agency
  - Metropolitan Region/Local Rescue Headquarters

- Province/County/District Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters
  - Head: Provincial Governor or Mayor

- Local Disaster and Safety Management Headquarters in Local Governments

- Other Administrative Departments and Public Agencies

Risk Communication: Daily briefing

- YTN news

- Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency
### Vaccination: Analysis of Effectiveness in ROK

#### Severe case proportion and protective effect by age group (cumulative as of 13th Nov 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Unvaccinated confirmed group</th>
<th>Fully vaccinated confirmed group</th>
<th>Protective effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confirmed cases</td>
<td>Severe Cases*</td>
<td>Severe case proportion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (19 or above)</td>
<td>207,155</td>
<td>6,814**</td>
<td>3.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-74</td>
<td>13,423</td>
<td>1,196</td>
<td>8.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 or above</td>
<td>3,716</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>25.78%</td>
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* Cases of severe/critical or death within 28 days after confirmation

** In order to correct the difference in age distribution between the unvaccinated group and the fully vaccinated group, the expected number of severe cases is calculated based on the age composition ratio of all confirmed patients.
The Way Forward

Vaccinate more people as possible

- Vaccination for minors (ages 12 to 17) and pregnant women
- Booster shots for population at high risk, including the immunocompromised, patients having low immunity such as elderlies, acute leukemia patients, workers at healthcare facilities, and J&J vaccinated individuals

Step-by-step recovery plan (11.1~)

- Gradual easing of social distancing restrictions for fully vaccinated individuals
- Epidemiological investigation and quarantine policies by risk groups (based on vaccination, etc.) to improve efficiency
- Focus on treating severely ill patients and gradually expand at-home-care for mild Covid-19 patients
- Introduction of “Covid19 Pass” used for facilities at high risk such as entertainment facilities and spas, in order to support going back to normal preventing infection of unvaccinated
COVID 19 in vulnerable groups

- Covid19 clusters in convalescent hospitals, care facilities, psychiatric hospitals, foreign workers dormitories, etc.
- Socio-economic and socio-cultural impacts are concentrated in disadvantaged groups, including temporary employees, small business owners, low-income families

Response to Inequality

- Encourage Covid19 test and vaccination of the groups (periodic testing for facilities, vaccination by priority, anonymous and visiting testing/ vaccination)
- Strengthen social welfare policies including stimulus check, emergency fund for stable employment, etc.
The Way Forward: Response to Inequality (2)

Inequality between countries to response COVID 19

- Limited access to vaccines and therapeutics of low and middle income countries
- Lack of experiences for Covid19 responses

Response to Inequality

- Support Covax by commitment of 200 million dollars, vaccine donation for neighboring countries
- Sharing Covid19 response experiences with other countries and organizations
- Investment in capacity building of countries with vulnerable healthcare systems, including GHSA commitment of 100 million dollars, technical assistance with counterpart institutes
Thank you!