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IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON HEALTH WORKERS

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JOURNAL ARTICLES

Wang, D., et al. (2020). "Clinical Characteristics of 138 Hospitalized Patients With 2019 Novel Coronavirus–Infected Pneumonia in Wuhan, China." JAMA.

- In this single-center case series of 138 hospitalized patients with confirmed NCIP in Wuhan, China, presumed hospital-related transmission of 2019-nCoV was suspected in 41% of patients, 26% of patients received ICU care, and mortality was 4.3%.
- Presumed Hospital-Related Transmission and Infection:
 - Of the 138 patients, 57 (41.3%) were presumed to have been infected in hospital, including 17 patients (12.3%) who were already hospitalized for other reasons and **40 health care workers (29%)**.
 - Of the hospitalized patients, 7 patients were from the surgical department, 5 were from internal medicine, and 5 were from the oncology department.
 - **Of the infected health care workers, 31 (77.5%) worked on general wards, 7 (17.5%) in the emergency department, and 2 (5%) in the ICU.**
 - One patient in the current study presented with abdominal symptoms and was admitted to the surgical department. **More than 10 health care workers in this department were presumed to have been infected by this patient.**

Adams, J. G. and R. M. Walls (2020). "Supporting the Health Care Workforce During the COVID-19 Global Epidemic." JAMA.

- **In China, an estimated 3000 health care workers have been infected and at least 22 have died.**
- Transmission to family members is widely reported.
- Many health care workers have conditions that elevate risk for severe infection or death if they become infected with COVID-19; organizations need to decide whether such workers, including physicians, should be redeployed away from the highest risk sites

Wang, J., et al. "Exploring the reasons for healthcare workers infected with novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in China." Journal of Hospital Infection.

- NHCPRC reported in press conference of WHO-China Joint Mission on COVID-19 [8] that **3,387 healthcare workers have confirmed infected COVID-19, with 22 (0.6%) deaths.** More than 90% of infected healthcare workers were from Hubei province.

Source cited (in Chinese): News ifeng web. 3387 cases of healthcare workers infected with novel coronavirus disease 2019. Available at: <https://news.ifeng.com/c/7uKe45oGSZM> [Accessed on 28 February 2020].

Wenham, C., et al. (2020). "COVID-19: the gendered impacts of the outbreak." *The Lancet* **395**(10227): 846-848.

- Data from the State Council Information Office in China suggest that more than 90% of health-care workers in Hubei province are women, emphasising the gendered nature of the health workforce and the risk that predominantly female health workers incur.⁵

NEWS MEDIA ARTICLES

China says 1,716 health workers infected by coronavirus, six dead, Reuters, 14 Feb 2020.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-health-medics/china-says-1716-health-workers-infected-by-coronavirus-idUSKBN2080MA>

COVID-19 sickens over 1,700 health workers in China, killing 6. CIDRAP News, Feb 14, 2020.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/02/covid-19-sickens-over-1700-health-workers-china-killing-6>

- Zeng Yixin, the National Health Commission (NHC) vice minister, said the number of infected healthcare workers is rising and that they are facing heavy and tiring workloads. He said 87% of the infected medical staff are from Hubei province, the outbreak's epicenter.

Health care workers are at high risk of catching COVID-19. The Verge. 6 March 2020.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/3/5/21166088/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-doctors-nurses-health-workers-risk>

- In Washington state, [25 health care workers](#) are under observation after interacting with a people who were not diagnosed with COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, until after they died.
- In [Northern California](#), three health care workers tested positive for the virus, and dozens are in isolation.
- During the SARS outbreak in 2002, [one-fifth](#) of all cases were in health care workers.

Italian nurse: 'An experience I would compare to a world war.' The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/13/italian-doctor-an-experience-i-would-compare-to-a-world-war>

- Medical staff in Italy Medical staff describe immense pressure and war-like conditions in fight to treat patients
- The virus has infected many doctors and nurses as they worked. Roberto Stella, the president of the order of doctors in Varese, Lombardy, died on Wednesday. The 67-year-old was tending to patients until he started to suffer symptoms and went into intensive care himself last Friday.
- Among the dead was a 59-year-old doctor and close friend of Roberta Re, a nurse at Piacenza hospital in Emilia-Romagna, the region with the second highest number of cases.

NSW aged care worker catches coronavirus, Canberra Times.

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6661018/nsw-aged-care-worker-catches-coronavirus/?cs=14231>

- An employee at a Sydney nursing home who was the primary carer for 13 elderly residents has tested positive for coronavirus. The woman is aged in her 50s and hasn't recently travelled outside Australia.
- She started experiencing flu-like symptoms around February 24 and is now in a stable condition in hospital, Mr Hazzard said.
- Eleven of the 13 residents for whom she was carer have been placed in isolation.

Iran to call dead medical staff 'martyrs' as virus kills 291

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iran-virus-kills-54-death-toll-climbs-291-69499759>

Authorities in Iran 'hiding' COVID-19 deaths by listing other causes on death reports

<https://observers.france24.com/en/20200312-iran-coronavirus-authorities-hiding-covid-19-deaths-reports>

- According to official figures from the central government, **21 Iranian doctors and nurses have died** of the virus so far, 11 of them in Gilan province.
- Medical staff in Iran have been told not to talk to the media about the COVID-19 outbreak, doctors told to 'lie' in reports
- Reports that the official number of COVID-19 cases in Iran is much lower than the real number.

'We are making difficult choices': Italian doctor tells of struggle against coronavirus

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-italy-hospitals-doctor-lockdown-quarantine-intensive-care-a9401186.html>

OTHER REPORTS

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic: increased transmission in the EU/EEA and the UK – sixth update – 12 March 2020. Stockholm: ECDC; 2020. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/RRA-sixth-update-Outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-disease-2019-COVID-19.pdf>

- An important proportion of reported cases in China and Italy, especially from the initial period of the outbreaks have been among healthcare workers.
- Transmission events have been reported in hospitals, with COVID-19 cases identified among healthcare workers and patients [9,10] as well as in long-term care facilities.
- As of 9 March, an ongoing outbreak of COVID-19 at a long-term care facility (LTCF) with 120 residents in Washington State (United States) has had 54 residents transferred to local hospitals and 26 deaths, of which 11 were within the facility. Of the 15 that died in hospital, 13 had tested positive for COVID-19. Additionally, 70 of 180 LTCF employees reported symptoms compatible with COVID-19

WHO (4 March 2020). Health workers exposure risk assessment and management in the context of COVID-19 virus. Interim Guidance.

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331340/WHO-2019-nCov-HCW_risk_assessment-2020.1-eng.pdf

- Recommendations for health workers with high risk and low risk for infection:

WHO. Rights, roles and responsibilities of health workers, including occupational safety and health. https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/who-rights-roles-respon-hw-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=bcabd401_0

- Health workers are at the front line of any outbreak response and as such are exposed to hazards that put them at risk of infection with an outbreak pathogen (in this case COVID-19). Hazards include pathogen exposure, long working hours, psychological distress, fatigue, occupational burnout, stigma, and physical and psychological violence.
- This document highlights the rights and responsibilities of health workers, including specific measures needed to protect occupational safety and health.