

Coronavirus disease-2019 pandemic and its very high risk of international spread

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Abstract

The coronavirus disease-2019 outbreak that has been first detected in a single city in the Wuhan city of China has eventually been reported in 216 nations and territories and has been acknowledged as one of the major public health threats. The overall risk of the spread of the disease has been graded as very high in both the regional and global settings. Such a declaration by the World Health Organization makes it imperative and compulsory for the policy makers and all the public health authorities that it is high time to implement appropriate interventions which are suitable to the local case scenario and the settings. To conclude, the international risk of transmission of infection has been identified as very high and it becomes the responsibility of each and every one of us to reduce the risk of spread of the infection.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, Transmission, World Health Organization

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INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease 2019 outbreak that has been first detected in a single city in the Wuhan city of China has eventually been reported in 216 nations and territories and has been acknowledged as one of the major public health threats.¹ Owing to its magnitude, universal distribution and the number of deaths which the novel infections have resulted across the world, including the developed nations, the disease has been declared as a pandemic. In fact, as on 10th July 2020, a cumulative total of 12,322,395 cases and 556,335 deaths have been reported in all the affected nations.¹ The overall case fatality ratio of the infection has

gradually increased to 4.5% and is significantly more than seasonal influenza.¹

COVID-19 transmission

The available scientific evidence obtained from various epidemiological studies have suggested the presence of a wide range of potential modes of transmission of the infection, including close contact, droplet, airborne, fomite, fecal oral, blood borne, vertical and animal to human transmission.^{2,3} Among all these modes of transmission, close contact and droplet modes have been identified as the most common ways and are predominantly responsible for the community level transmission and international spread of the infection across heterogeneous settings.²⁻⁴

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Very high global risk of transmission

The overall risk of the spread of the disease has been graded as very high in both the regional and global settings.³ Such a declaration by the World Health Organization makes it imperative and compulsory for the policy makers and all the public health authorities that it is high time to implement appropriate interventions which are suitable to the local case scenario and the settings.³⁻⁵ The need of the hour is to strengthen case detection through the expansion of laboratory facilities, isolation of the confirmed cases, quarantine of the contacts of the cases and promotion of universal infection prevention and control measures. At the same time, specific measures have to be taken to improve the facilities for extending appropriate treatment facilities, including rehabilitation services.^{4,5}

Role of stakeholders

The role of each and every stakeholder is to stay dedicated to the efforts for the effective containment of the infection. It is very important that the members of the community understand the high risk of transmission of the infection and accordingly strictly adhere to the recommended prevention and control measures.³⁻⁵ This essentially includes staying indoors unless necessary, avoiding close contacts with friends and family members, using face masks to avoid getting exposed to the infection, practicing frequent hand washing either through soap and water or through alcohol based hand rubs. Moreover, people should also practice respiratory etiquettes to not only prevent the acquisition of infection, but also to prevent the onward transmission of the infection.^{3,5}

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the international risk of transmission of infection has been identified as very high and it becomes the responsibility of each and every one of us to reduce the risk of spread of the infection.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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