

Basic Policies for Novel Coronavirus Disease Control
by the Government of Japan
(summary)

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The Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare reported to the Prime Minister that there is a high risk of coronavirus spreading widely, and therefore the Government established the Task Force based on the Act on Special Measures against Pandemic Influenza.

In order to protect the lives of the people, it is important to reduce the number of infected people, particularly the elderly, and to maintain medical systems and social functions.

Although there are currently no areas where large scale spread of the virus has been identified, containment of patients with unknown routes of transmission or clusters is important to prevent an explosion of cases and minimize the number of infected patients, severe cases, and death as much as possible.

This Basic Policies present measures to be taken so that the government, local governments, and the people will work together to have an accurate grasp of the situation and further advance countermeasures against the novel coronavirus infectious disease.

1. Facts on current situation of the novel coronavirus infectious disease

In Japan, increase in the number of patients with no apparent routes of transmission are reported sporadically in several regions. While the domestic situation is continuing to hold, it could move toward a pandemic with an explosive spread of infections.

Looking at overseas, the novel coronavirus infection has been identified in all the continent, except for the Antarctica, with some areas with an explosive spread of infections. There are some patients who are presumed to come back to Japan after infected overseas.

2. Overall Policies

- Slow down the speed of infection by containing clusters and reducing chances of contact.

- Minimize incidence of severe cases and death through surveillance and appropriate medical care especially for the elderly.
- Minimize the impact on society and economy through pandemic prevention and economic and employment measures.

3. Key Points

(1) Provision and sharing of Information

a) Provide accurate information and clear message for the public, promote awareness-raising to help change people's behavior, and encourage calm response.

- Provide accurate and clear information
- Ensure implementation of basic countermeasures against infection
- Ensure that people do not go to workplace, attend school or leave home if they are sick
- Dissemination of guidelines for visits to medical institutions (call for prior telephone consultation)
- Prevent discrimination against infected persons, close contacts and medical personnel

b) Provide appropriate information to Japanese nationals who live in countries where infection is spreading, and those who have returned to Japan, as well as to foreign nationals living or staying in Japan.

(2) Surveillance and Information gathering

- Identify suspected disease carrier based on the notification from the doctor, and conduct tests that the doctor considers necessary
- Strengthen the testing system by utilizing local and private institutes. Grasp and coordinate the PCR testing system.
- Continue to develop simple test kits for rapid diagnosis.

(3) Pandemic Prevention

- Present appropriate measures to prevent clusters and reduce contacts, based on the local situations.
- Request that necessary measures be taken, such as closing off facilities and refraining from holding events, if there is a possibility that a cluster may be occurring,
- Call for cooperation in self-restraint in avoiding gatherings in closed spaces,

crowded places, or close-contact settings. Pay particular attention to metropolitan areas.

-Secure and foster experts in measures against cluster and strengthen the health center system.

- Ensure thorough infection control measures in places including the followings

--Medical institutions

--Elderly facilities

--School

--Public transport

-- Workplace (actively promote tele-work and staggered commuting)

- Continue to implement entry restrictions, travel warnings, strengthened quarantine, and visa restrictions, from the viewpoint of preventing the flow of infected people into Japan

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(4) Medicare

- Secure a flexible medical provision system in each region, depending on the spread of infection.

- Perform tests at the discretion of the doctor and, if a patient is found, provide recommendations and necessary measures for admission to hospitals to provide appropriate medical care.

- Establish a system for those with mild symptoms to be cared at home, in areas where there is a risk that an increase in patients of the Coronavirus may interfere with the provision of hospitalized medical care for other severely ill patients.

- To prepare for possible significant increase of patients in Japan, secure medical provision structure including through considering division of roles among medical institutions in each region. Secure necessary beds, personnel, and necessary medical equipment such as respirators.

- Strengthen the system for providing medical interpreters and accelerate clinical research and treatment to verify the effects of therapeutic agents

(5) Economic and employment measures

Expediently implement necessary and sufficient economic and fiscal policies without pause, taking bold measures to return the Japanese economy to a solid growth trajectory

(6) Other important notes

- Consideration of human rights
- Supply of goods and materials (increase production and ensure smooth supply of masks, disinfectants, foodstuffs, etc.; distribute such items by the government to medical institutions and nursing care facilities for the elderly; prohibit resale of masks, etc.)
- The government will work closely with the international community to collect information on the response by WHO and other countries and regions. In addition, we will actively share the knowledge obtained in Japan with related organizations such as WHO and other countries and regions, and contribute to the measures of the international community as a whole in relation to countries and regions including emerging and developing countries.
- Maintaining social functions
- Decisions on the declaration of emergency will be made based on a comprehensive assessment, taking into account the opinions of the Advisory Committee.