Taipei City Government’s COVID-19 Epidemic Prevention SOPs

After the outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan in January 2020, the number of confirmed patients worldwide soared to 2,152,674 (as of April 17, 2020). Taiwan was originally predicted to be one of the most impacted countries outside of China due to its geographic location and its economic and trade relations with China.

However, Taiwan’s rapid and rigorous response has allowed the country to stay open without any strict lockdown measures. Instead, the government and people have implemented and followed rigorous hygiene and social distancing measures. In addition, the government has been rigorously screening all arrivals from impacted areas since December 31st, 2019. Currently all arrivals must undergo strict 14 day quarantine.

As a result of these measures, only 395 COVID-19 cases as of April 17th have been confirmed so far in Taiwan. In addition, the number of people infected by the common flu has also declined significantly.

Website Address: https://english.gov.taipei/covid19/

Strategies

In response to the highly infectious nature of COVID-19, Taipei City Government has prioritized cooperating with the central government, embracing creative approaches, and leading by example for other cities and counties.

The preventive measures adopted are as follows:

Share Best Practices
Cities and countries around the world will eventually need to re-open safely. Taipei City Government believes that successful epidemic prevention relies on global collaboration.

**Deploy Medical Staff Strategically**
Reduce the burden on medical professionals by using general government staff for administrative tasks that doesn't require having a medical background.

**Implement Economic Measures**
Provide economic relief measures and strict health management measures to keep private enterprises from closing down.

**Deploy a Second Line of Defense**
Install isolation facilities to accommodate the increasing number of people requiring isolation.

**Advantages in Taiwan**

**Experience Handling SARS**
The 2003 SARS epidemic hit Taiwan particularly hard, so the government implemented many policies and structures to prevent future epidemics in the country.

**Public Cooperation with Wearing Surgical Masks**
The public wears masks in crowded spaces such as public transportation and department stores. Masks are readily available online, at pharmacies, and vending machines.

**Excellent National Health Insurance System**
Short waiting times, low costs (US $5 per visit), and a 90% satisfaction rate for outpatient services.

**More than 20,000 Hospitals and Clinics**
An extensive network of health care facilities has allowed Taiwan to provide quick and timely
care to patients even during increased use of facilities.

Creative Policies

Drug Collection at Hospital Entrances
Patients who require prescription medications can swipe their National Health Insurance card at hospital entrances and receive their medications without entering the hospital, reducing the risk of infection.

Home Quarantine Management
Location tracking, assistance service from village chiefs, and penalties for violating rules.

Taipei Metro Epidemic Prevention Procedures
All passengers are required to wear masks, some stations have temperature scanners, and stations and carriages are disinfected daily. Frequently touched equipment is disinfected once every 4–8 hours.

Quarantine Hotels in Taipei
Hotels are for people who do not have a suitable place to quarantine and hotels part of this program are provided with disease prevention guidelines.

Regular Hotel Subsidies for Family Members of Individuals Under Home Quarantine
To alleviate pressure on the limited supply of quarantine capable hotels, this program gives subsidies to family members of an individual required to undergo quarantine so that the family members are at reduced risk of infection.

Disease Prevention Ambulances in Taipei
This special ambulance service is for home isolation individuals with suspected symptoms of Covid-19, life-threatening emergency health issues, or medical treatment requirements (such as dialysis and chemotherapy).
Disease Prevention Taxis in Taipei
This special taxi service is for individuals suspected of potentially having COVID-19 and for those who need transport from home quarantine to hospitals for routine medical treatments.

School Epidemic Prevention Measures
Daily temperature checks, criteria for suspending in-person classes, and online learning platforms if in-person classes need to be suspended.

SOPs