EPI·WiN

COVID-19 Outbreak – 17 March 2020

Key Messages/Actions for WRs

1. WHO has characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic

It is a pandemic that can be controlled, and it is the time for global solidarity. All countries must take a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach, built around a comprehensive, blended strategy to prevent infections, save lives and minimize impact. In your role:

- o Advise countries to activate and scale up emergency response mechanisms.
- o Encourage authorities and partners to communicate with people about the risks and how they can protect themselves.
- o Ensure that MOH has protocols to find, isolate, test and treat cases and trace contacts.
- o Ready hospitals. Protect and train health workers. Encourage an all-of-society response and community spirit.

2. The COVID-19 Partners Platform is ready for use by countries (http://covid-19-response.org)

- International support to countries for the COVID-19 response is being mobilized quickly:
  - o The Partners Platform is where matching between donors and countries happens.
  - o The Partners Platform has been designed to be user-friendly and for the information to be rapidly uploaded to facilitate identification of technical support as well as funding requests.
- To use the Platform, each country needs to have two country-level admin users with privileges to enter and edit data and to make requests for support.
  - o **REQUEST: Please work with the UNRC/UNCT to identify two country-level admin users:** one UN-country admin user and one Government admin user. These country admin users would be those who understand the national plan and budget very well. Ideally the Government admin user will have decision making power for government planning.
  - o For countries without a UNCT/UNRC but with a WR, WRs are expected to lead the support to countries for the management of the platform, with regional support.
  - o Submit the names and emails of two Platform country admin users on the OneDrive worksheet: Access Permissions Admin Users
- Online briefing sessions are organized for country teams, please coordinate with the UNRC and other UNCT members to join the sessions to learn more about the Platform:

- o Online demo sessions are held twice daily Tues – Fri, 17 -20 March, at 08h and again at 17h GMT+1. Join by Zoom https://mckinsey.zoom.us/j/243584093 using PC, MAC, iOS or Android device

3. A summary of key guidance on testing, clinical care and quarantine

- **WHO recommendations for testing for COVID-19**
  - o WHO recommends to test all suspect cases and contacts who develop symptoms.
- **Clinical care for COVID-19 patients**
  - o WHO recommends that all confirmed cases be isolated and cared for in a health care facility and WHO has updated treatment guidelines for patients with ARI associated with COVID-19, which includes clinical care guidance for vulnerable populations (e.g., older adults, pregnant women and children).
  - o In areas where health care facility isolation of all cases is not possible, WHO emphasizes prioritizing those with the highest probability of a poor outcome to be cared for in a health care facility: that is, patients with severe and critical illness and those with mild disease and risk for poor outcome (age >60 years and patients with underlying co-morbidities such as chronic cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, cancer).
  - o If mild cases cannot be isolated in health care facilities, those with mild illness and no risk factors could be isolated in non-traditional facilities, such as repurposed stadiums or gymnasium, if possible, where they can remain until their symptoms resolve and laboratory tests become negative.
  - o Alternatively, patients with mild disease and no risk factors can be managed at home. WHO provides guidance home care of confirmed patients without underlying conditions who have mild disease. Within our home care guidance, WHO provides recommendations on how to isolate confirmed cases within the home and guidance on personal hygiene, basic IPC measures and how to care for the member of the family who is infected with the COVID-19 virus.

- **Criteria for a negative case**
  - o WHO recommends that all confirmed cases (regardless of severity of disease) need to have 2 negative PCR tests at least 24 hours apart and clinical recovered before they can be released from hospital or home isolation. In the non-health care setting where testing is not possible, WHO recommends that confirmed patients remain isolated for an additional two weeks after symptoms resolve. We are modifying our home care guidance to include a statement about this.
- **Quarantine of close contacts**
  - o WHO recommends that close contacts of confirmed cases are isolated in a quarantine facility. If it is not possible to quarantine in specialized facilities, then home quarantine can be used. All close contacts should monitor for signs/symptoms and be tested according to WHO case definitions.
  - o In addition, we realize that some countries/areas are facing community transmission and are working on finalizing guidance for Laboratory Testing Prioritization and Clinical/IPC

Concept of Operations according to the 4Cs transmission scenarios. We will share these as soon as possible.

o Please contact Regional Offices or the Country Focus team (for triage) if you have any questions.

4. Promote the use of latest guidance with national authorities and expect upcoming guidance

- Briefing note about mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) aspects of COVID-19
  - o The document summarizes useful guidance about how to, during the COVID-19 outbreak:
    - help older adults cope with stress,
    - support the needs of people with disabilities,
    - design messages & activities to help children deal with stress,
    - set up MHPSS activities for adults in isolation/quarantine,
    - provide support to response workers, and
    - circulate community MHPSS messages.
- Upcoming guidance includes:
  - o Case Management Concept of Operations: will guide the care of COVID-19 patients as health systems response capacity is challenged; to ensure that COVID-19 patients are able to access life-saving treatment, without compromising the public health objectives set.
  - o Interim Guidance on COVID-19 Readiness and Response Operations in Humanitarian Situations, Camps and Camp-like Settings: aims to address the specificities of humanitarian settings, notably camps and camp-like settings and their host communities, in scaling-up readiness and response operations for the COVID-19 outbreak through effective multi-sectoral partnership. Ultimately, the best way to protect the entire population from COVID-19 is to extend all measures to everyone without exception and without discrimination.