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## Regular Briefing of Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters on COVID-19

- ▲Implementation status of social distancing,
- ▲measures to enhance efficiency of self-quarantine, and
- ▲infection control and support measures for nursing hospitals, etc. -

The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters held a meeting today presided over by Head Chung Sekyun (Prime Minister) along with the central government and 17 cities and provinces to discuss ▲implementation status of social distancing, ▲measures to enhance efficiency of self-quarantine, and ▲infection control and support measures for nursing hospitals at the Central Disaster and Safety Management Center in Government Complex Seoul.

- **Head Chung** told, at the meeting, that he **also thought the completion of the enhanced social distancing** on April 6 (Mon) and afterward will **not naturally bring us back to normal**, emphasizing that we **should cautiously keep ourselves prepared**.
- He also said **starting school semester requires enough communication and preparation**, asking the relevant ministries including the Ministry of Education and the local governments to **fully gather various opinions from the public in advance**.
- In addition, he directed the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety and relevant agencies to rapidly develop **mask supply prediction system**, allowing them to **predict status regarding supply and demand of masks** on a weekly basis, and **set up countermeasures in advance**.

<b>1</b>	<b>Implementation status of social distancing</b>
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- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters was reported and **reviewed the implementation status of the enhanced social distancing** by **Busan, Daegu, Ulsan, Gyeongbuk, and Gyeongnam**.
- The five cities and provinces **briefed mainly on awareness-raising measures for stronger social distancing, current inspection status of religious, indoor sports, and entertainment facilities whether to comply with infection prevention guidelines, and follow-up measures**.

- The Headquarters is also **carrying out on-site inspections** along with the local governments to check if **stricter social distancing** is well practiced nationwide.
- On March 25 (Wed), **50,216 facilities**, such as call centers, religious, indoor sports, entertainment facilities, were **inspected**, and **an administrative guidance was placed on 4,344 facilities** confirmed to have **breached the infection prevention and control guideline** according to the **on-site inspection results**.
- Head Chung expressed gratitude** to each local government and citizens for putting great efforts including **practicing social distancing** to overcome COVID-19, calling for **continuous and joint effort** to move toward the stable conditions.

2	<b>Status of improved quarantine system for entrants from abroad</b>
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Measures to enhance management of entrants from abroad under self-quarantine

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters **strengthens management of self-quarantine subjects among arrivals from abroad** to block the risk of infection possibly imported from abroad including Europe and its spread.
- First, those subject to self-quarantine out of incoming entrants are **mandated to install the 「self-quarantine safety protection app」** to

help the authorities **check** their suspected symptoms including fever, **their locations** and **compliance with living guideline**.

- In addition, the government **keeps no leniency for violating self-isolation rules including leave** from insolation area **without valid reason**, and **plans to immediately file complaints against those violators**.
- Through 「**Safety e-Report**」 and reporting center of each local government, the authorities plan to allow **reporting from citizens in parallel** to prevent the subjects from leaving the isolation areas.
- The Headquarters called for matured citizenship to protect ourselves, saying **following the self-quarantine guideline** is "our promise" to keep.

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### Installing new open-type outdoor screening clinic in Incheon Airport

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- The government sets up and operates a **open screening clinic** ("open walk-thru station") located **outdoors in Incheon International Airport** from **13:00, March 26 (Thu)** to quickly **detect COVID-19 infections of asymptomatic foreign entrants to the nation**.
- The **open screening clinic** is installed in a wide outdoor space **without walls** with a feature of **ventilating all the time** through **natural wind**.

- There is no need for **ventilation time** thanks to **natural wind**. As the space is **open**, the **possibility of infection** by contacting surfaces is **low**, which makes this suitable for **quick and safe sample collection** targeting a large number of people.
- In **general screening clinics**, a sample can be collected from a **single person every 30 minutes** due to **disinfection and ventilation time**, while **open type** can collect a sample every **4 to 5 minutes**.
- **Incheon Airport** has a **large outdoor space** which can be **controlled**, making this place **suitable** for installing such an **open-type screening clinic**.
- The government plans to **install** open-type screening clinics in **Terminal 1** and **Terminal 2** in Incheon International Airport, and operate **8 “partitioned sample collection places (booths)”** in each clinic, and **16 booths in total**.
- **10 public health doctors**, **31 voluntary nurses and lab technicians**, **35 military personnel**, and **8 employees of National Health Insurance Service** are working in the Incheon Airport screening clinic.

### 3 Infection control and support measures for nursing hospitals

- The **Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters** discussed **ways to strengthen infection control for caregivers**, known as a blind spot for infection control, in nursing hospitals and to **support nursing hospitals** to better manage their infection by themselves.

- Although caregivers in nursing hospitals have high risk of infection due to frequent contacts with patients, there have been challenges in controlling their infection since they are not employed directly by hospitals.
- **The Ministry of Health and Welfare temporarily made it possible to register personal information of caregivers by establishing and operating nursing hospital inspection system\*** from March 20 (Fri). Through this measure, it became possible to systematically **check their daily health conditions and excuse them from work in case any symptom appears.**
- \* Established the system added to the admission/discharge management system of nursing hospital patients operated by the National Health Insurance Service
- In order to **address the lack of masks for caregivers**, masks were additionally secured in consultation with the **Ministry of Food and Drug Safety**, and started to **be distributed to nursing hospitals through Korean Hospital Association** (Mar. 24~ approximately 38,000 masks/day).
- In addition, the authorities plan to ask the local governments and nursing hospitals to **mandatorily conduct COVID-19 test for newly recruited caregivers**, and allow them to **work after the test results come out.**
- In order to reduce the burden of test costs nursing hospitals and caregivers bear, **they will be covered by the local governments\***.

\* Costs for COVID-19 diagnostic tests included in the already provided special subsidy for disaster and safety (KRW 126.2 billion)

- **The Central Disaster Safety Response Headquarters will also bolster support to encourage nursing hospitals to actively prevent and control infection.**
  - The confirmed cases, suspected cases, and patients with pneumonia of unknown cause hospitalized in **isolation rooms of nursing hospitals were covered by insurance** but now, those who need **diagnostic tests for COVID-19 due to fever, cough, sore throat, other respiratory symptoms** can be also covered by insurance.
    - Therefore, medical fees for isolation rooms can be covered **regardless of the test results** when nursing hospitals **isolate patients with fever or respiratory symptoms in advance** and **conduct the diagnostic tests.**
  - With the temporary **provision of the "fee for infection prevention and control in nursing hospital"**, a nursing hospital is provided with the **support of KRW 1,150 per day for each inpatient\*** when the hospital designates an infection control manager (doctor, nurse) and **implements enhanced staff and facility management.** (Mar. 24~)
    - \* It takes about KRW 69.6 billion per year. An infection control manager is allowed to have multiple positions.

4

**Measures to encourage blood donation and enhance safety for blood donation in the military**

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters requested all public to **participate in blood donation.**

- As of March 24, the blood reserve was 5.3 days' worth, significantly recovered thanks to the public cooperation. However, there is a concern about recurrence of emergency as individual blood donation has recently decreased, and blood usage could become normalized which was on the decline due to COVID-19 spread.
- The Ministry of Health and Welfare **strengthens the monitoring of blood collecting staff** (twice a day) so that **the public can join blood donation with ease**, and **creates a safe blood collection environment** by having **donors and collection staff mandatorily wear masks** (1 per person).
  - \* As for group blood donation, it will be carried out in consideration of the currently implemented social distancing.
- In addition, the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters **released the measures to enhance the standard operating procedure (SOP) for safely managing infection in case of blood donation in the military camps** where group donation is actively made.
- Accordingly, the Korean Red Cross plans to **organize, and gradually operate teams specialized in collecting blood in blood centers from March 28 (Sat)**.
  - **Staff members in charge of blood collection in the military camps are monitored every day and excused from that work** ① **if they or their housemates visit nations or areas affected by community-based COVID-19 spread or special disaster zones in 2 weeks**, or ② **they contact to a confirmed patient or self-quarantine subject in 2 weeks**.\*.



\* In the case of Daegu, Gyeongbuk blood centers, all employees are excluded from blood collection in the military camps.

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters expressed appreciation to military personnel for actively joining blood donation in groups for stable blood supply, adding that it will work harder to create a safe donation environment for the public.

<b>5</b>	<b>Current status regarding supply and demand of masks</b>
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※ A separate briefing is planned for this information. In case of any query, contact to the following information:

Affiliation	Division	Contact Information
<b>Ministry of Economy and Finance</b>	Economic Policy Division	044-215-2710, 2712
	Price Policy Division	044-215-2770, 2771
<b>Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy</b>	Bio-Convergence Industry Division	044-203-4390, 4391
<b>Public Procurement Service</b>	Procurement Planning Division	042-724-7210, 7265
<b>Ministry of Food and Drug Safety</b>	Customer Risk Prevention Policy Division	043-719-1711, 1722

※ All Koreans **faced with issues** regarding exorbitant prices of or hoarding masks and hand sanitizers **are strongly advised** to actively **report** to the authorities through the **reporting center** (02-2640-5057/5080/5087), **customer call center** (1372), and **MFDS website** ([www.mfds.go.kr](http://www.mfds.go.kr)).