



COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES MANILA
SEAMEO TROPMED Philippines
*Regional Centre for Public Health, Hospital Administration,
Environmental and Occupational Health*



STATEMENT ON THE 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

10 February 2020

We, the faculty of the College of Public Health, University of the Philippines Manila (UP CPH) are one with the rest of the University in support of the Department of Health and the World Health Organization to disseminate updated, accurate and relevant information on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus. The UP CPH upholds public health over other interests.

In particular, guided by advice from the DOH, WHO and our UP CPH infectious disease experts, we would like to put emphasis on the following:

For the general public

- **Follow advice and guidelines issued by the DOH and WHO.** The situation is unfolding and as such, it is important to listen to regular updates from DOH and WHO. Share information only from credible and verified sources.
- **Do frequent and proper handwashing.** Handwashing should be done with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub for at least 20 seconds, and should be done after handling objects in public areas, such as door or vehicle handles, or after direct physical contact with persons having cough, colds or fever.
- **Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing,** using tissue, which must be disposed of properly. Alternatively, you may cover your mouth and nose with your folded elbow.
- **Use surgical face masks only when you have cough, colds, or when exposed to crowded areas.** After exposure to a crowded area, refrain from touching the face, nose and mouth and immediately do proper handwashing. The proper use of surgical masks will suffice, and will also prevent undersupply of N95 masks that can adversely affect healthcare facilities that need them the most.
- **Consult the nearest health care facility if with cough, fever or difficulty breathing.** Report any travel history or exposure to persons with similar symptoms.
- **Avoid direct physical contact such as kissing, hugging, or hand shaking.**
- **Self-quarantine for 14 days if with recent travel from or transit through China, starting from the day of departure from China.** Within this time period, monitor and report any onset and recurrence of symptoms.

- **Stay healthy.** Keep a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle that will help build resistance to infection, while also observing the precautionary measures listed above.

For the University community (faculty, students, and staff)

- In anticipation of official University policy, any member of the UP Manila community who is experiencing new onset cough and colds is advised to wear a face mask. You may remain in your homes when you are experiencing fever or difficulty breathing.
- Faculty are also advised to explore alternative teaching strategies, such as the UP Manila Virtual Learning Environment, in cases of class suspension. Administrators are also advised to explore alternative ways of organizing meetings, such as teleconferencing.

For health workers

- Do frequent handwashing as is advised for the general public, but most especially after every patient contact.
- Use N95 masks and wear appropriate personal protective equipment when taking care of patients under investigation for the 2019-nCoV virus.
- Health workers are kindly advised to relay information disseminated by the DOH and WHO, and refrain from sharing information that has not been shared or endorsed by DOH or WHO.

For policy makers and leaders (LGUs and national agencies)

- Ensure that official statements being issued are in line with the DOH and WHO recommendations.
- Reassure the public that there is a disease surveillance system in place, and encourage self-reporting and quarantine in case symptoms manifest and signs are observed.
- Provide a working 24/7 hotline number or contact detail which can easily be used by concerned citizens wanting help.
- Encourage self-quarantine in case of recent travel to or transit through China
- Follow guidelines set by the health facilities or locally implemented by the DOH on triaging, quarantine and referrals, and support them in implementing these guidelines.
- Create guidelines for the suspension of class or work, such as in the event of a confirmed case within one's area of jurisdiction.
- Ensure that nobody will be left behind – those who are affected must receive quality care as soon as they need it, and resources are available.

UP CPH, in continued consultation with our partner agencies and the rest of the University, will continue to issue audience-targeted recommendations as the situation evolves.

END OF STATEMENT