

Hong Kong Civil Care & Security's External Community Assistance – SARS

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Background

A cub reporter, Mary Moon, has come to me for advice and assistance in preparing an article on Hong Kong's Civil Care and Security external assistance.

I have been pondering for quite some time: "Which topic should I advise to her? Would she like to prepare a topic about SARS?" As I have asked Mary about this matter! "SARS is the hottest topic in the Global and this report has been written for everyone who has paid effort to SARS."

Introduction

SARS struck Hong Kong a heavy blow at the healthcare sector and trample of short-term economy of Hong Kong. There were large amounts of different communities have been pouring in to aid Hong Kong's heroic fight against SARS, such as Financial Assistance, Medical Assistance, Communication Equipment and Expert Opinion.

The Government of Hong Kong had received batches of medical supplies and protective gear from the Central Government of China to help control SARS, such as surgical masks, protective clothing, eye shields, face shields and infrared thermal imaging machines. (<http://info.gov.hk/gia/general/200305/29/0529252.htm>)

As a matter of facts, Hong Kong is the smallest SAR of China. When China faced SARS, he just provides small amount of financial assistance to Hong Kong.

Therefore, Hong Kong laid himself to face SARS. There are tangible and intangible assistance sources from internationals and local, such as WHO, CDC, other national civil care & security agents and institutes, etc.

The SARS epidemic affected 1,755 individuals, including 300 deaths in Hong Kong. However, different communities get together to concert efforts, which was regarded by WHO as on of the hardest to control because of the territory's immense population density and fluid boundaries with neighboring areas, was successfully controlled. (SARS in Hong Kong: from Experience to Action, SARS Expert Committee, 2003, p.6)

There are various sources to provide civil care and security assistance of Hong Kong for SARS. I will indicate international level and local level in this report, in which included Financial Assistance, Expert Opinion, Community Care and Service, Education, Medicine Study from Local, etc.

International Assistance Resource

- Following tables are breakdown of governmental assistance to China.

Table 1

Financial Assistance from International Government

United States	500,000 US	For Buy Medical appliances
Japan	206.5 million Yen	For Buy Medical appliances
British	5 million US	For Buy Medical appliances
Korea	104,900 US	For Buy Medical appliances
India	8,400 US	For Buy Medical appliances
Sudan	100,000 Yuan	For Buy Medical appliances
Australia	500,000 Australian	For Buy Medical appliances

(<http://english1.peopledaily.com.cn/200305/15>)

- Appropriations from international organizations to China.

Table 2

International Financial Assistance from Organizations

The World Bank	20 million US	Loans
The Asian Development Bank	2 million US	Grants
International Financial Assistance from International Non-Government	2.6 million US	Emergency Equipments

(<http://english1.peopledaily.com.cn/200305/15>)

- Non-governmental donations from local institutions and organizations

Table 3

Local Financial Assistance from Organizations

DBS, HKU, CUHK (http://www.cuhk.hk/ipro/pressrelease/press2003.htm)	3.9 million HKD	For CU & HKU doing Research
The Community Chest of Hong Kong, Operation Unite Fund, Teachers Against SARS, Apple Daily Charitable Foundation, Hong Kong Christian Council, and Social Welfare Sector Against SARS (http://www.hkcss.org.hk/cb4/TFAS_Report_Brief_Version.doc)	20 million HKD	To PolyUHK for SARS patients and their family members, suspected SARS cases and those under home confinement
Manulife (http://www.manulife.com.hk/manulife_public/english/content/newsroom/public_news/28Apr03E.pdf)	2 million HKD	For psychological impact of the SARS epidemic on children and how families and schools
CityUHK (http://www6.cityu.edu.hk/puo/CityUMember/Story/Story.aspx?id=20041220234725)	327 thousand HKD	For the children whose parents have fallen victims to the disease of SARS
Hong Kong Jockey Club (http://www.hongkongjockeyclub.com/english/news/news_200305054875.htm)	\$500 million HKD	For protect the community from emerging or evolving public health threats

The People's Republic of China administers 33 province-level divisions, including 22 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, 4 municipalities, and 2 special administrative regions. When China received assistance from different sources, he just provided a small amount of financial assistance to Hong Kong.

It is fact that comparing the donation of Hong Kong Local and Other counties, Hong Kong himself has had a strong financial assistance. Therefore, we don't need any financial support from other countries.

Expert Opinion Learning from International

The World Health Organization - WHO

WHO recommends that global surveillance continue and that suspected cases are reported to national health authorities. WHO urges national health authorities to remain on the alert cases and followed recommended protective measures. SARS patients should be isolated and cared for using barrier nursing techniques and provided with symptomatic treatment.

WHO, through the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, is working with its partners to track the global dimensions of this outbreak and coordinate efforts to quickly identify the causative agent, improve diagnostic precision, and provide advice on recommended treatment. WHO works closely with health authorities in the affected countries to provide epidemiological, clinical and logistic supported as needed.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - CDC

CDC launched research on SARS jointly with the Chinese CDC, especially on the examining methods of the coronavirus.

China

Prevention of cross-border infection of SARS. During the outbreak the Department of Health and the Shenzhen authorities met on many occasions to discuss border coordination and joined hands in combating SARS.

US

The Columbia University's School of Public Health sent two professors to Beijing to attend a Sino-US seminar on SARS.

Minister of Science and Technology Xu Guanghua to Beijing invited Professor David Ho, director and CEO of the New York Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center, for SARS prevention.

Japan

The Government of Japan sent a medical team to help China fight against SARS, made up of two doctors, an official with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and an official from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

European

Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission had sent a letter to the President Hu Jintao of China told that they would like to provide assistance to China for fight against SARS.

Fidel Casxtro Ruz, President of Council of State of Cuba also sent a medical team to China.

Prime Mister Adrian Nastase of Romania had offered China medical equipment during his visit to China.

Margherita Boniver, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy also joined hands with China to improve local medical equipment, train medical workers, prevent and treat SARS in western China.

Africa

Bangladesh and Pakistan both offered the list of medical equipment to China for fright against SARS. (<http://english1.peopledaily.com.cn/200305/15>)

Responsibilities & Relationships

International Community Care and Service from Government, Organizations and Non-Government Organization

Guideline to Public

The above expert opinions also reviewed that all Governments ought to issue advice to all citizens for recommends that persons planning to travel to SARS areas should defer all travel until further notice. On the other hand, Travelers arriving ore leaving Hong Kong were required to have their body temperatures checked at majority airports.

1. Persons who are traveling or have traveled to these areas should monitor their health for 10 days following their departure from these SARS areas. Should a high fever and one or more one of the following respiratory symptoms, such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing occur, all recommends that medical advice be south as soon as possible.
2. Independent of current international SARS outbreak, Governments, International Organizations and Non-Government Organizations routinely recommends their citizens, students, travelers and staffs seek an individual risk assessment consultation with their personal physician or a medicine clinic to determine their individual risks for illness.
3. All citizens, students, travelers and staffs are reminded to practice good personal hygiene.

The above three points of guideline to public is the most importance factor to control majority countries SARS epidemic transmission and spread of the infectious diseases.

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International Communication

International communication plays a vital role in infection control. During the SARS outbreak, support from the WHO and other international health organization was an enormous help to Hong Kong in halting the transmission and spread of the infectious diseases.

Local External Assistance Resource

Education from Hong Kong Non-Government Organization

Promotion to Citizens

Centre for Health Protection and medias of Hong Kong launched a series of “TV advertisement” for elderly, schoolteachers and parents on SARS prevention. Teachers and healthcares organized health talks for local school and kindergartens, explaining to publics how to use different types of thermometers to take body temperature, how to wash hands and wear masks in 2003.

Elderly Health Services provided resources for the providers of the elderly services.

Everywhere there was a place to disseminate information on SARS prevention. We feared no burning, no pouring rain. They were not bound by time or place, playgrounds, piers, shopping malls, podiums of building and community alls were their action points.

e-learning to Students

SARS students did not go to school, CUHK through the Hong Kong Healthy Schools Award Scheme and School health training programs, the Centre for Health Education and Health Promotion has established a strong network with local schools.

The above center also held a series of seminars in March and April 2003 to prepare schools in Kowloon West Island and New Territories for class resumption. The seminars were well attended and many practice issue were discussed.

Take Care of Citizens Psychosocial Impact

The Hong Kong Mood Disorders Centre of CUHK then examined the psychosocial impact of SARS on the residents of the Amoy Gardens in a study

conducted in 2003. The survey shows that the daily lives of close to 90 per cent of the respondents were deeply affected in term of social relationship, work and family lives. (http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/sars_care)

Social Welfare Department emphasizes on the need to follow existing guidelines made available by the authorities on how to prevent the disease from spreading and on how to protect ourselves. Their enthusiasm warmed SARS stricken Hong Kong (http://www.swd.gov.hk/tc/index/site_whatsnew/year_10/)

Medicine Study from Local

The Chinese University of Hong Kong - CUHK

A center for Emerging Infectious Diseases (CEID) of (CUHK) prepare for possible attacks by SARS and other emerging infectious diseases in Hong Kong. Then CUHK researchers firstly developed an effective test for SARS, accurate from day one of the disease. This breakthrough was a global impact in containing future outbreaks.

The above team of CUHK researchers also accumulated clinical their experience in looking after SARS patients, had identified three phases in the course of SARS, for which different treatments are required. As a result, they had investigated the effectiveness of convalescent serum therapy, and started using the therapy on SARS patients in late March of 2003.

The Department of Community of CUHK completed the construction of a research model for the SARS epidemic in Hong Kong in May 2003.

The genetic fingerprints of the coronavirus from patients have been sequenced. The result showed that the virus has mutated and the minute changes allow the path of infection to be traced.

The Centre for Epidemiology and Biostatistics of CUHK had conducted six rounds of randomly sampled telephone surveys to monitor change in public perception, behavior and attitude related to SARS. (http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/sars_care)

Sharing Experiences

The Chinese University of Hong Kong - CUHK

The CUHK Faculty of Medicine and the Hong Kong Medical Association jointly had organized an evening symposium on “SARS Update – A Global Perspective”. There were totally 600 health-care professionals participated in the symposium. Speaker included Dr Tracee Treadwell from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Professor Zhong Nan Shan from the Guangzhou Medical College.

Canadian experts Dr Donald Low and Dr Allison McGeer, as well as Dr Arthur Chern from the Ministry of Health in Singapore presented their findings via teleconferencing. Local situations were reported by Professor David Hui of the Faculty of Medicine and Dr Lo Wing Lok of the Hong Kong Medical Association.

There was deployed a team of the Faculty of Medicine of CUHK to Princess Margaret Hospital to support SARS treatment. They shared their experience in treating SARS patients and implementing infection control measure with doctors from Princess Margaret Hospital.

The Department of Medicine and Therapeutics and Department of Microbiology had collaborated with WHO, CDC and other top laboratories on the provision of expertise and advice on SARS research.

The Faculty of Medicine had released findings on the latest clinical development on SARS patients and shared clinical experience with local medical professional and health-care experts.

The Department of Diagnostic Radiology and Organ Imaging and the Department of Medicine and Therapeutics jointly studies the chest radiographic and high resolution computed tomography (HRCT) features as an outcome predictor in SARS. A special website has been constructed to facilitate investigation of suspected cases in other regions. The site is linked to the WHO and other SARS-related websites and has received over 220,000 visits since 2003.

The Faculty of Medicine signed a collaboration agreement with the Department of Health of the Macao SAR in 2002. With the emergence of the first SARS case in Macau in April 2003, the Faculty of Medicine has been providing clinical advice on SARS to Macao Hospital Conde S Januario. A telemedicine session was also held between the experts of the two institutions to share information on infection control, clinical symptoms and medical treatment.

(http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/sars_care)

Community Care and Service from Local Hong Kong Red Cross - HKRC

In view of the recent outbreak of atypical pneumonia or SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Red Cross (HKRC) is launching the captioned Campaign for providing SARS prevention hygiene kits to the vulnerable elderly and the needy to help them prevent contracting SARS. The HKRC

calls for the Hong Kong people to continue practicing their caring spirit through supporting this Campaign.

With a mission to mobilize the power of humanity and to build a caring community, and with a responsibility to protect life and health, the HKRC hopes to raise HK\$2 million for the Campaign. Part of the donations received will be used for providing 100,000 hygiene kits for the vulnerable elderly, especially those frail and singleton elderly. The hygiene kits will be distributed through the HKRC volunteers and through a network of elderly service agencies.

During such distribution, SARS prevention education and care and concern will also be brought to the needy elderly during this distressful time. Each packet of hygiene kits will provide several days' supplies of sterilizing tablets, standard surgical masks, alcohol pads, and SARS prevention guidelines with an encouraging message tailor-made for the elderly. Other donations will be spent on contingency projects for the vulnerable and needy. (<http://www.redcross.org.hk/home.cfm?Mid=193&FMid=157&popup=0&langid=1&Ver=T>)

JPMorgan, in support to this Campaign, has already pledged a donation of HK\$500,000 to the HKRC. To prevent further spread of SARS and to help the vulnerable elderly and the needy, the HKRC appeals to the Hong Kong people for their generous support to this Campaign.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong - CUHK

As part of the "Healthy 40" series, an episode on 4 May 2003 broadcast on TVB Jade covered issues related to SARS. Experts from CUHK and The Prince of Wales Hospital provided expert input and shared experience.

CUHK provides up-to-date information for healthcare professionals in Intensive Care and Anesthesia now. It also provides teaching material for those involved in training.

CUHK provided training in infectious disease control to health care professionals and researchers, Coordinating preparation for infectious diseases in the hospital and university environment and collaborating with health authorities such as the Bureau of Health, Welfare and Food, the Hospital Authority, the Department of Health and the future CDC in Hong Kong to deal with emerging infectious diseases.

The Hong Kong Mood Disorders Centre of CUHK, the Hong Kong Medical Association and Commercial Radio had jointly launched a three months campaign to

heighten public awareness of mood disorders in the wake of SARS.

(http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/sars_care)

Conclusion

Since the SARS epidemic hit Hong Kong in 2003. Different organizations had been on the frontlines in this battle.

We have to thank WHO, CDC, other nations civil care & security agents and all local institutions for provide the above assistance to Hong Kong. Secondly, we also thank all Hong Kong citizens for assist us to face SARS epidemic.

Frontline healthcare professionals made tremendous efforts and scarifies for the victory over SARS, but people from all walks of life also showed enormous support by being vigilant and putting good personal and environmental hygiene into practice. We must persevere with this unity for a healthier tomorrow.

To conclude, with cooperation and coordination from public, the government and various organizations, Hong Kong was finally returned safe and sound. The success of their assistance was very heartening.

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