

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION OF THE
POPULATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN**

734025, 69 Shevchenko Street, Dushanbe, tel. (372) 221-18-35, fax (372) 221-75-25

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To the Representatives of
the Civil Society Coalition
against Torture and
Impunity in Tajikistan

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan has considered the request of the representatives of the Civil Society Coalition against Torture and Impunity in Tajikistan, which was submitted to the Ministry on April 20. At the same time, we state that we have not stood aside the formation and coverage of the global coronavirus pandemic, which has raised concerns amongst human society across the world, and among the civil society of Tajikistan, in particular and we are prepared to work closely with you to prevent and respond to this plague of the century. The following are our response in relation to your questions.

Question: What are the statistics of viral infections of pneumonia, tuberculosis, typhoid fever in the first quarter of 2019 and 2020?

Answer: The number of pneumonia cases was 5192 people in the first quarter of 2019 and 5023 people in the first quarter of 2020, the number of tuberculosis cases was 1218 people in the first quarter of 2019 and 1137 people in the first quarter of 2020, no cases of typhoid fever were registered in the first three months of 2019 and 15 cases were registered during the first quarter of 2020.

Question: What protocols or actions have been developed for physicians and doctors when identifying/detecting suspected cases or symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus)? How should they act and warn?

Answer: In order to prevent the spread of coronavirus in the country, on January 23, 2020, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan established a permanent headquarter under the Ministry, developed and approved an action plan, which will be implemented in all medical and preventive institutions across districts and towns of the country.

At the same time, to date, specialists have developed temporary clinical protocols "Prevention, diagnosis and treatment of new COVID-19 coronavirus infection in children", temporary guidelines "On the diagnostics and treatment of new COVID-19 coronavirus infection (for physicians) ", training module "On the prevention, examination, diagnostics and treatment of new COVID-19 coronavirus infection", "Algorithm for detection, diagnostics and transmission of new COVID-19 coronavirus ", guidelines "On disinfection measures to prevent new COVID-19 coronavirus infection ", "Instructions on the activities of mobile emergency teams to prevent the invasion and spread of new COVID-19 coronavirus infection in the Republic of Tajikistan", "Instructions on medical and social services to suspects and people infected with the new COVID- 19 coronavirus" and other documents, all of which contain the necessary recommendations and instructions and actions for medical staff.

Question: Given that the reliability of tests from Russia has been questioned and the set of tests produced in China is flawed, we would like to clarify what the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan is undertaking to re-test the test results and analyses? Are these tests internationally accredited? Have they been approved by the WHO?

Answer: To date, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has received 23,000 test systems from the Russian Federation, 22,000 test systems from the People's Republic of China and 1,900 test systems from Germany through the WHO to detect the new COVID-19 coronavirus infection. It should be noted that all of these tests have been tested by the World Health Organization (WHO) and have quality certification.

Question: The head of the Main Department of State Sanitary and Epidemiological Control under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan Ibrohim Bobonazarov told in an interview that the test results are sent to London and Moscow. How are they sent, the tests itself or their findings or laboratory results summarized in Tajikistan?

Answer: Before the closure of flights abroad, analytical samples were sent to the World Health Organization (WHO) reference laboratories in Moscow, Novosibirsk and London to assess the quality of the virology laboratory of the State Service for Health and Social Protection. And the results were identical to the results received in the virology laboratory of the Service.

Question: How are the tests / findings / laboratory results re-tested after the flights had been suspended?

Answer: Unfortunately, after the closure of air flights, it is not possible to send samples abroad, and no samples are currently being sent.

Question: What additional assessments (clinical evidence, computed tomography and computed symptoms, general blood tests, biochemical tests) are considered when examining or making conclusions on the changes in the nature of pneumonia or coronavirus?

Answer: In addition to laboratory tests for coronavirus infection, X-rays, computed tomography, general blood and sputum tests are taken into account when establishing diagnosis.

Question: Which laboratories in the country are authorized and can give an opinion regarding the results of coronavirus testing?

Answer: In accordance with the requirements of the World Health Organization (WHO), a laboratory with biosafety level 2 is recommended for testing of the new COVID-19 coronavirus. Currently, only the Public Health Laboratory of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan complies with this recommendation.

Question: Which regions of the country have computed tomography of artificial ventilation?

Answer: This question is misstated, but we understand your purpose. It should be noted that in all regions of the country, including medical centers in the regional centers of the country, there is computed tomography equipment, as well as artificial pulmonary ventilation devices for the treatment of potential patients with coronavirus.

Question: In Russia and a number of European countries, it has been decided that all cases of influenza (ARVI) should be quarantined and be regarded as suspected coronavirus cases. What measures does the Ministry of Health of Tajikistan plan to take in this regard?

Answer: In the Republic of Tajikistan, all health workers have been instructed to fully monitor all the cases of acute respiratory acute respiratory disease (ARD) and influenza (quarantine) and

to immediately treat the cases of pneumonia and respiratory infections with antiviral and antibacterial medication.

Question: What measures is the Ministry of Health taking to train the medical personnel, especially the paramedics in remote areas and districts in differentiating coronavirus from pneumonia?

Answer: Within the framework of providing methodological and instructional support, 112 training sessions for training and clinical departments of family medicine in primary healthcare facilities, 226 awareness meetings with population and more than 2,500 working consultations on "Prevention of coronavirus and other similar viral infections" were held. In addition, 1,500 information leaflets, 3,500 booklets, 800 brochures and posters were distributed among the population, and information corners "Recommendations on coronavirus prevention" were established in the network of primary health care facilities.

Furthermore, based on the orders of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan, the State Institution "Republican Training and Clinical Center of Family Medicine" has developed the training module "Standard Operational Algorithm for New Coronavirus Infection" based on the recommendations of the World Health Organization, on the basis of which 49,323 employees of the network of specialized institutions, hospitals and primary health care facilities of the country were covered by mobile training courses.

We would also like to inform you that considerable amount of outreach work is being carried out among the population through all media outlets of the country including TV, radio, printed media and websites. Also, the Republican Center for Healthy Lifestyle has disseminated 53,409 posters and 60,000 booklets among the population, 16,370 stickers for secondary schools and in addition to posters 2284 disks and 290 flash drives with rollers on the prevention of coronavirus infection were provided for various institutions and organizations.

Question: Is there a plan to import/produce rapid tests that citizens can buy and test themselves? Is it possible to conduct and test for coronavirus in private clinics/laboratories?

Answer: It is currently difficult to obtain express tests, as most producing countries have banned the export of such materials to other countries. Certainly, when there is an opportunity, we can also use such a method of diagnosis.

It should be noted that the analysis of new COVID-19 coronavirus in private clinics or laboratories will be possible only after the achievement of the 2-nd level of biological safety.

Deputy Minister

M. Kamolzoda