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

- ▲ The outbreak status of and action plans for Itaewon club-related patients, and
 ▲ the status of school infection prevention and control efforts
 in preparation for in-person classes, 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 agendas including **▲ the outbreak status of and action plans for Itaewon club-related patients, and ▲ the status of school infection prevention and control efforts in preparation for in-person classes at the Central Disaster and Safety Management Center of the Government Complex Seoul.**

Head Chung received, at this meeting, a report regarding cluster infections from clubs in Itaewon that about half of the visitors listed

in the club's entry logs could not be reached, and ordered relevant agencies to devise measures to hold those who give false information in the entry logs accountable if the logs for multi-use facilities are falsely filled in, and to enhance the accuracy of the logs.

- He also stressed that situations such as the Itaewon club cluster infection **damage many people**, including self-employed and small business owners, and the government should **cautiously deal with them to minimize** the secondary and tertiary **spread of the virus** and **ease public concerns**.

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Outbreak status of and action plans for Itaewon club-related patients

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters discussed **the outbreak status of and preventive action plans for Itaewon club-related patients**, with the local governments such as **Seoul, Incheon and Gyeonggi-do** as the center.
- After the first confirmed patient who visited Itaewon clubs occurred on May 6, **the Seoul Metropolitan Government** completed infection control measures at seven facilities that the confirmed patient visited.
- Seoul is also **checking the visitors** after securing **the entry logs** and **CCTV from April 24 to May 6 for 5 clubs located in Itaewon**. As of 18:00 on May 10, **2,405 out of 5,517 club visitors were contacted over the phone**, and 3,112 have not yet been answering.
- The Seoul Metropolitan Government has expanded **diagnostic tests to**

all visitors to clubs and other nearby establishments in Itaewon, who visited there from April 24 to May 6, and has been conducting active surveillance even if they test negative. In particular, visitors to three clubs (King Club, Queen, and Trunk) from 22:00 on May 1 to 4:00 on May 2 are required to be in self-quarantine.

- Since May 7, the Seoul Government has dispatched an immediate response team, operated **situation management rooms for each district, including Yongsan-gu, Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seodaemun-gu, and Jongno-gu, and sent out emergency alert text messages twice** to guide the visitors to refrain from going out and take diagnostic tests.
 - In the future, the government plans to identify the confirmed patients' travel routes and the contacts through in-depth epidemiological investigation, and continues to strengthen monitoring of those who are placed under self-quarantine.
- Meanwhile, the Seoul Metropolitan Government issued an administrative **order of prohibition of gathering on 2,060 entertainment facilities in the city from May 9 until a separate order is issued**, and the Seoul Metropolitan Government, autonomous districts and the national Police Agency will jointly **mobilize 301 people to check whether they stick to prohibition of gathering.**
 - Seoul announced that it would **take strong measures such as accusation** if those facilities fail to carry out the administrative **order of prohibition of gathering.** If a confirmed patient occurs while they run businesses in violation of the order, the government **will claim the right to indemnity including medical expenses.**

- **Incheon** has been requesting people who visited **6 clubs** (King Club, Queen, Trunk, The fountain, Soho, and H.I.M.) in Itaewon since April 29 to take diagnostic tests and **prohibit interpersonal contact**.
- In addition, an **administrative order of prohibition of gathering** was imposed for **2 weeks from 20:00 on May 10 on the nightlife establishments** (clubs, hostess bar, singing clubs, stand-up bars, cabarets) and collatechs. If they violate the order, **imprisonment of up to two years or a fine of up to 20 million won** will be imposed and expenses for infection control will be claimed in case the virus spreads.
- Incheon also conducts diagnostic tests on **new patients and new employees at nursing hospitals and mental health institutions** for the first time in the country, and **allows hospitalization and service only if they test negative**.
- **Gyeonggi-do conducts diagnostic tests for free** on residents of the province, who visited **any of the six Itaewon clubs** (King Club, Queen, Trunk, The fountain, Soho, and H.I.M.), and has **ordered prohibition of interpersonal contact** starting from May 10. The province also guided the visitors to **receive medical examination at screening stations and get epidemiological investigations**.
- It has been also conducting diagnostic tests and self-quarantine for colleagues at Seongnam City Medical Center and Tmax where confirmed patients were identified.
- **Starting from May 10, Gyeonggi-do issued an administrative order of prohibition of gathering for two weeks on 5,730 entertainment**

facilities including all entertainment bars and collatechs, and ordered those establishments to attach the letter of administrative order and notices on the establishments. **If they violate the order, the province plans to impose a fine and claim damages if any patient is confirmed in those facilities.**

- Meanwhile, **215 people in 35 groups** were organized **jointly with Gyeonggi-do, cities, counties and police stations within the jurisdiction** to conduct **intensive inspections** of entertainment facilities in the province **from 20:00 on May 8 to June 7.**

The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters requested those who visited Itaewon area **from April 29 to May 6**

to actively cooperate for the measures initiated by the quarantine authorities such as minimizing contact with others, staying at home, **reporting to health centers or 1339, and receiving tests at screening stations.**

It also announced that in the process, **personal information of individuals will be strictly protected and respected.**

2	Status of school infection prevention and control efforts in preparation for in-person classes
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The Ministry of Education revised and distributed the **“Guideline of infection prevention at kindergartens, primary and secondary schools”** on May 7 as social distancing was shifted to distancing in daily life. This guideline contains information related to **prevention and control efforts at schools, such as ▲ preventing the inflow of suspected**

COVID-19 cases with symptoms, ▲ managing students during educational activities at schools, and ▲ establishing a response system if a case is confirmed.

○ In order to **block** the novel coronavirus **infection** at schools, a **daily inspection system** plans to be operated to **check whether s/he has a suspicious symptom in the form of questionnaire every morning at home from one week before returning to school, and to report information to schools such as the likelihood of infections, including the overseas travel history of students and cohabitants for the last 14 days.** It's been applied since May 7 for high school seniors who will be back in classrooms starting from May 13.

○ After students **returning to schools** for in-person classes, **fever tests** will be **conducted at least twice a day** before entering to a classroom and during the day, and **fever and respiratory symptoms** will be **checked frequently** before the start of each class. If there is any suspected symptom, those who show the symptoms will be guided to **receive medical examinations and diagnostic tests at the screening stations immediately.**

- During educational activities, **desks and items must be rearranged** to maintain sufficient personal distance, and tools needed for **daily disinfection** should be often provided.

○ In case a **suspected case is found** among students and faculty members, s/he is guided to immediately **take medical examinations and diagnostic tests** at the screening stations. In case a confirmed case is identified, **all students and staff will return home** and the system will be switched to **the distance learning system.**

- Confirmed cases are suspended from going to school until released from isolation. **Suspected cases, patients under investigation, and students in self-quarantine are suspended from going to school for 14 days, and in such cases, s/he will be deemed to attend school even though they are absent.**

The authorities said they will supplement infection prevention and control measures until in-person classes start and continue to inspect prevention and control efforts in schools and provide necessary support.

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Diagnostic tests to be expanded to nursing and mental hospitals

The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters said that **COVID-19 diagnostic tests will be expanded to nursing hospitals and mental hospitals** as it is necessary to strengthen monitoring of major vulnerable groups and facilities in communities.

○ Since February 7, the government has provided **full support for the cost of COVID-19 diagnostic tests** with the health insurance and government budgets for confirmed cases, suspected cases, and patients under investigation under **the case definition of the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.**

○ In addition, the government has decided **to expand health insurance coverage** in consideration of expert opinions that **it is necessary to conduct tests on patients without COVID-19 symptoms** who are

newly admitted to nursing hospitals and mental hospitals.

- Previously, if there were no symptoms related to COVID-19, **individuals had to pay the full costs of the test**, but this measure allows them **to receive 50% of the cost support from health insurance for one test when s/he is hospitalized** at a nursing hospital or a mental hospital.

* (Before new measure) individuals pay full costs of 80,000~160,000 won → (After new measure) individuals pay partial costs of about 40,000 won (50%)

- This will **be applied from May 13** and will continue until a separate notice comes, and the government will review whether to apply additional health insurance coverage to inpatients at medical institutions while closely looking at the trend of COVID-19 pandemic.
- **On average, 1,694 people are hospitalized per day** in nursing hospitals (as of 2019), and **about 2,000 patients are expected to be tested per day** through this measure.
- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters said that it expects **the effect of blocking the inflow of hospital infections and preventing the spread of COVID-19** while **strengthening the inspections and monitoring of COVID-19 among senior citizens in communities** through the expansion of diagnostic tests to nursing hospitals and mental hospital.