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## COVID-19: The role of tertiary care teaching hospitals in India

The COVID-19 virus which was imported from Wuhan in China, named SARS-COV-2, devastated life and the livelihood of almost the entire world. The impact of COVID-19 is not only restricted in health, but also in economy, social obligation, and mental health of millions of people around the globe. In fact, COVID-19, a pandemic, is bringing each and every country with a newer challenges every day in a unpredictable way!<sup>[1]</sup>

The most treacherous component of this pandemic is in health-care system especially concern to health-care workers by literally making everyone including doctors, nurses, and policymakers perplexed to handle this pandemic.

We believe that this virus is really throwing a challenge to all the health-care establishments, especially tertiary medical teaching hospital in a remote part of India irrespective of its infrastructure and accessibilities.

It is known to all of us that in India about 5%–10% of all the COVID-19-positive patients will have a chance to become ill and actually need immediate hospitalization. Around 30% out of 5%–10% might require intensive care unit support or even ventilator or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation support. Rest of the COVID-19-positive patients may be cared by oxygen or other supportive care.<sup>[2]</sup>

The most crucial part of administration of pandemic COVID-19 management in tertiary medical teaching hospitals is to think judiciously for both COVID and non-COVID medical conditions as medical teaching hospitals cannot ignore non-COVID in view of the pandemic situation for the interest of the society, community, and medical trainees. Hence, it is a really a huge responsibility of tertiary care hospital

administration to ensure the safety of doctors, nursing, and other paramedical staff in the hospital where COVID-19 and other routine patients are likely to admit and expect equal care from the hospitals. A sincere and effective management system in coordination with experts and governments is the need of the hour to tackle the situation.

Tertiary care teaching hospitals must build proper infrastructural reforms to accommodate COVID-19 patients. A complete isolated COVID-19 area or unit should be formed which should have separate entrance via flue clinic or suspected patient zone after primary screening in an isolated area of the hospital. This will ensure that other non-COVID-19 patients including emergency patients with non-COVID-19 ailments will not mix up with possible infectious patients. One must also remember that even infectious disease unit of any tertiary teaching hospitals should be completely separated from COVID-19 care area. The area must have facilities to make negative air pressure by interventions of air-handling facilities. Hospitals must have adequate personal protection equipment or ventilators, video laryngoscopes, and ultrasonic nebulizers.

The second important thing is tertiary teaching hospitals must follow the standard operating procedures to treat COVID-19 patients. The protocols of WHO and ICMR are actually recommended as per the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.<sup>[3]</sup>

The procedure includes the mechanisms to minimize the impact of the disease and to prevent the transmission of disease to health-care professionals or even patients or their caregivers. There should be routine briefing by senior consultants with COVID-19 warriors. The procedures also include routine

update to various government authorities regularly. In addition to that, the hospital administration must regularly motivate doctors, interns, and postgraduate medical students. Perhaps, this is the most crucial challenge for tertiary care teaching hospitals' authority. If this part is not taken care by the hospital authority, the fight against COVID-19 will be incomplete and unsuccessful.

The end point of this discussion is to generate research data and resources on COVID-19. The research on this virus requires not only laboratory support, but also supports from clinicians to understand and treat better. It is the duty of the medical institutions across India to develop a strong research team that comprises of basic scientists, biotechnologists, bioinformatics, epidemiologists, psychiatrists, and clinical experts from all the disciplines with appropriate ethical guidelines.<sup>[4]</sup>

India has great potentiality to fight and defeat COVID-19 pandemic very effectively provided we all work together for humankind.

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