

# Community Action for the Wuhan Coronavirus Pandemic

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**C**OMMUNITY ACTION is a key aspect of the multiscale response to pandemics. As of Jan. 28, 2020 (GMT+8), the 2019\_nCov has 5974 confirmed and 132 deaths in China. The exponential growth with its extraordinary high  $R_0$  (estimates range from 2.6 to 6.32), and the recent evidence that asymptomatic cases are also contagious, make this outbreak extremely challenging to contain. The long incubation period, estimated at up to 14 days, and mild-to-no symptoms until they become severe, further erode the effectiveness of traditional response strategy.

Extraordinary actions are needed to prevent consequences for global health. Even with the lock-down of Wuhan and other cities with a combined population of 40 million, there is doubt about the ability to contain the outbreak. 5 million people were reported to leave Wuhan before the lock down began. The scientific community is racing to understand the virology and transmission properties of the virus, but the general population should not wait before taking action.

Decreasing contact among individuals is effective in fighting epidemics regardless the specifics of the virus. We recommend people in the infected areas to practice self-isolation. The extent of isolation that is recommended depends on the location.

For people in Wuhan, Huanggang, and other cities already locked down, large scale isolation is already being practiced. Isolation should be performed at the family level. People should prepare for an isolation period of 14 days or even longer.

Such an isolation requires strategies to obtain necessities and address concerns, for example:

- Distribution of food and other essentials while minimizing human contact
- Adequate supply and organized delivery of medical consumables
- Open, timely information on the pandemic and local updated to keep the isolated people informed and minimize panic buying and panic departures.
- Professional home care for the elderly and disabled, and procedures for on-site maintenance
- Guaranteed operation of essential infrastructure (water supply, electricity, Internet)
- Early psychological help and interventions
- Online working and education
- Accessible entertainment, including on-line

For people in other parts of China that have not yet seen an upsurge in reported cases, due to the mass population mobilization during the Lunar New year, isolation is also recommended for the length of the longest incubation period to minimize exposure to people who stayed in Wuhan before the transportation ban.

For people in other countries, isolation is not recommended. However, limiting exposure to potential asymptomatic carriers is advisable.