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

- ▲ Plan for adjustment of specialized infectious disease hospitals, and
▲ progress of Thanks_Challenge Campaign for medical workers -

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters** held a meeting today **presided over by Vice Head 1 Park Neunghoo** (Minister of Health and Welfare) along with the central government and 17 cities and provinces to discuss agendas including the **▲plan for adjustment of specialized infectious disease hospitals, and the ▲progress of Thanks_Challenge Campaign for medical workers.**
- Vice Head 1 Park Neunghoo** emphasized, at the meeting, we should **remain vigilant against the spread of COVID-19, establish daily quarantine system, and effectively mobilize resources for quarantine** despite the slightly downward trend of newly confirmed cases.
- He added that **many people from various fields**, including the general public, celebrities and heads of municipal and provincial

governments, **have been participating in the “Thanks_Challenge” campaign**, which has been underway on SNS since April 16 for encouraging medical workers, and **asked for a lot of support and participation going forward.**

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Plan for adjustment of specialized infectious disease hospitals

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters discussed **the plan for adjustment of specialized infectious disease hospitals**, as one of the ways to prepare for a long-term battle with the COVID-19, to **flexibly operate beds** in consideration of **the balance between the general care and COVID-19 treatments** and the trend of newly confirmed cases.
- Accordingly, **some of 67 hospitals with 7,500 beds** designated to treat coronavirus patients, which were secured in large quantities due to the sudden spread of the virus, **will be adjusted and reduced**, and then **will be converted into general beds**, leaving the minimum number of beds in the cities and provinces.
- The cutback in beds will be **prioritized targeting hospitals with low utilization rates**, and **further reduction will be carried out** after establishing **the bed-management and re-operation plan** for each region.
- **The first batch of 682 beds in 12 hospitals** which currently have no confirmed patients, **will be removed from the list on April 23**, and **the second cuts will be carried out additionally in April** for

hospitals that are not suitable for sustainably responding to infectious diseases (e.g., nursing hospitals, hospitals for industrial disasters) and **11 hospitals** with a utilization rate of 5 percent or less.

- **The third reduction will be pushed ahead for 12 cities and provinces, excluding Daegu, North Gyeongsang Province and the metropolitan area, after setting up the bed-management and re-operation plan for each region in early May. After that, the additional cutback in beds in other areas such as Daegu, North Gyeongsang Province and 5 cities and provinces in the metropolitan area will be reviewed based on the trend of confirmed patients.**
- **If the four rounds of reductions are completed, the number of beds for infectious diseases will be adjusted to keep around 1,500 to 2,300 across the country under the situation that the daily number of new cases remains below 50.**
- Even if specialized infectious disease hospitals are **converted into general hospitals**, they should be **prepared to reactivate promptly** in case of a crisis by **maintaining the facilities temporarily installed** for the treatment of COVID-19 and **establishing the bed-management and re-operation plan.**
- In particular, the crisis situation will be **divided into four levels** based on the trend of confirmed patients, and **the appropriate number of beds will be maintained** for each level. If the situation occurs, **the number of hospital beds for the next level will be secured within 10 days.**

<Classification by level (draft)>

Level	Level - 1	Level - 2	Level - 3	Level - 4
Confirmed patients a day (number)	less than 50 people	50 people or more	100 people or more	1,000 people or more

2 Progress of Thanks_Challenge Campaign for medical workers

□ The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters discussed the **progress of the cheering campaign for medical workers, “Thanks_Challenge”,** which has been **underway since April 16 (Thursday).**

○ The online-based **public participation relay campaign, “Thanks_Challenge”***, is ongoing for 8 days.

* A public participation-based relay campaign that posts a photo or a video of sign language gestures, which mean “respect” and “pride”, along with three hashtags (#ThankstoYouCampaign #ThankstoYouChallenge, #ThankstoHealthworkers) and the names of three people to continue the challenge

○ As of 12:00 on April 22, **more than 2,643 people participated,** and a **number of celebrities*** and **major institutions and their heads**** also **joined to convey a message of gratitude and respect to the medical workers.**

* Actors Park Hae-jin and Jung Bo-seok, Singer BoA, KimJong-seo, Lovelyz, Apink, Carrie Tv, etc.

** Government of the Republic of Korea, Gangwon Province, North Chungcheong Province, Gwangju Metropolitan City, Incheon Metropolitan City, Seo-gu in Incheon Metropolitan City, Yongin City in Gyeonggi Province, Commissioner general Min Gap-ryong of the Korean National Police Agency, Incheon City mayor Park Nam-chun, Sejong City mayor Lee Chun-hee, Dong-gu mayor in Gwangju Im-taek, and Seocho-gu mayor Cho Eun-hee, ect.

- The media also **urged the public to pay attention to the campaign by reporting or giving favorable reviews** on the campaign through articles and columns.



Officials from the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters plan to **wear the “ThankstoYou badge”*** made as part of the “Thanks_Challenge” campaign, at **government official events** including briefings from today, and it is supposed to **deliver the badge** to medical workers and **the public who participated in the campaign by lot**.

* The symbolic badge of “Thanks_Challenge” campaign uses sign languages meaning “respect” and “pride”.

<The images of “ThankstoYou badge” (2 types of badges with a message card)>



- The government will also provide **regulation (guidelines)** on the use of badge designs so that all citizens can **freely produce and utilize** “ThankstoYou badge”, from mid-May.
- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters continues to express its **gratitude and support to all medical workers for their dedication and hard work** with the public through the “Thanks_Challenge” campaign.