

Virtual Fifth Health Cluster Coordination Meeting
Kathmandu, Nepal
7 May 2020 -THURSDAY (2:00 – 4:00 pm)

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Gunaraj Lohani, Lead of the Health Cluster and co-chaired by Dr. Lungten Z. Wangchuk, Co-lead of the Health Cluster. Health Coordination Team from all the Provinces were also included in the meeting. The meeting was attended by more than 51 agencies, all seven provincial teams, all relevant officials of the MoHP. More than 107 members participated in the meeting virtually.

Dr Samir Adhikari and Dr. Lungten Z. Wangchuk facilitated the meeting.

TIME	AGENDA ITEMS
14:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome Remarks: Dr Gunaraj Lohani, Chair/Lead 2. Opening and key update from MOHP - Dr Gunaraj Lohani Chair/Lead 3. Action points last meeting and brief presentation from partners: Dr Lungten Wangchuk, Co-Chair
To	4. Provincial Update – (Province 7,6,5,4,3,2,1). Facilitated by Dr. Samir, HEOC
15:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Key Asks and comments by Advisors and Chair 6. Summary of the meeting by co-Chair 7. Closing by chair

Synopsis of the meeting:

Dr. Samir Kumar Adhikari, on behalf of the Chair welcomed all the participants and provided brief update from MOHP. on policy, status of laboratory and testing, risk communication, information sharing, COVID-19 surveillance, contact tracing, Infection Prevention and Control measures, COVID-19 case management, and logistics & supply.

The details of tests and isolation/quarantine of COVID-19 cases as of 6 May 2020 were provided.

Dr. Adhikari also informed that the following guidelines has been endorsed in the past week.

- “Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of cleaning and decontamination of the ambulance used in COVID-19” <https://tinyurl.com/y6ufnsag>
- “Directives on management of hazard/risk allowance to human resources engaged in treatment of COVID-19 cases, 2077” <https://tinyurl.com/va78b2qw>

<p>As of 6 May 2020</p> <p>Total PCR sites: 18 (Provincial Public Health Laboratory, Biratnagar and Karnali Academy of Health Sciences newly added)</p> <p>Total PCR tests done: 14096</p> <p>Total PCR positive: 99</p> <p>Total active cases: 77</p> <p>Total discharged: 22 (6 in past week)</p> <p>Total RDT performed: 52970</p> <p>Total isolation beds: 2983</p> <p>Total people in isolation: 136</p> <p>Total quarantine beds: 49746</p> <p>Total people in quarantine: 19734</p>
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 Health Cluster Coordination Meeting # 5



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- “कोरोना भाईरस (कोभिड-१९) को संक्रमणको उपचार बापत अस्पताललाई अनुदान उपलब्ध गराउने सम्बन्ध आदेश, २०७७ (Directives to reimburse hospitals for COVID-19 case management)” <https://tinyurl.com/ybnphelh>
- “कोभिड-१९ युनिफाईड अस्पताल सञ्चालन आदेश, २०७७ (Directives to operate COVID-19 Unified Hospitals)” <https://tinyurl.com/y9dls9d3>

After the key updates from the acting chair, Dr. Lungten Wangchuk, Co-chair provided updates of support from different health partners and sub-clusters (Mental Health and Reproductive Health) for COVID-19 response. She thanked health sector partners for their continuous support for the COVID-19 response. On 6 May 2020 AIN coordinated and handed over health logistics to MOHP based on the key asks/ needs presented by MOHP during the health cluster coordination meetings. AIN was appreciated for prioritizing their support based on MOHP's requests. The chair also highlighted that two more PCR testing sites has been added for ramping up tests in the country, making it to 18 tests sites. The co-chair informed that NRCS has capacity and willingness to support paramedics and ambulances where and when needed as they have presence in all the districts and the location map was also shared.

Dr Samir facilitated the provincial presentation and all Provincial Health Cluster Leads briefly updated the activities conducted, issues experienced, challenges they faced, and way forward in the meeting. The major issues from the provinces were:

- Inadequate protective commodities like PPE (goggles, masks -N95, face shields, gowns)
- Inadequate PCR testing logistics (lab reagent, RNA extraction kits)
- Inadequate human resources (laboratory)
- Coordination issues (between three level of government)
- Transportation issues
- Reimbursement of expenses for the management of quarantine

After the provincial updates from chair, co-chair, and provincial chairs, Sudurpaschim Province provided information on innovative modality of continuing basic health services, specially SIA, WHO IPD will share the necessary guidance related to this. The query on reporting requirements was raised by one of the partners and this was also addressed by Dr. Samir, as the Incident Command System has been activated, all the supports has to be channelized through “one door mechanism” ie, all report through Health Emergency Operation Center (HEOC), Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) only.

Dr. Lungten, co-chair then summarized the key ASKs from MoHP as well as provinces.

- Challenges with COVID-19 related supplies particularly Tests, VTM, swabs, PPE specially N95 masks and others
- Continuation of basic and essential health care services
- Risk communication and innovative community engagement
- Support needed for quarantine facilities



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Dr. Gunaraj Lohani, the chair of the meeting responded queries raised by the Provincial Health Teams.

- **Exit plan for lockdown:** Dr. Lohani ensured that the exit strategy has already been developed and the draft will be finalized soon and shared.
- **Guidelines for proper functioning in management of COVID-19:** Dr. Lohani stressed that all the required guidelines for management of COVID-19 has been uploaded in the HEOC/MOHP website (<https://heoc.mohp.gov.np/update-on-novel-corona-virus-covid-19/>) and requested provinces to follow these guidelines.
- **Sushil Koirala Praxhar Cancer Hospital:** Dr. Lohani informed that the hospital has already been identified as a COVID-19 level 1 hospital.
- **Inadequate supply of testing logistics:** Dr. Lohani shared that a new methodology “sample pooling” to the ratio of 1:10 will be used in PCR tests thereby providing testing of high number of population (ten times) with the logistics require for testing one individual. He also informed that NPHL is verifying a direct PCR testing methodology and will be shared once verified.

In addition, Dr. Lohani requested provinces to provide feedback on the guidelines that have already been developed rather than developing new guidelines. He also discussed on the activation of ICS in the provinces to manage coordinated response. Dr. Lohani also informed that Emergency Response Plan on containment of COVID-19 is being finalized and will be shared on website. He also informed that a simple matrix will be shared soon with the provincial health cluster co-chairs to get an overview of continuation of basic/essential health care services so that appropriate actions can be taken based on this. Dr. Lohani before concluding the meeting thanked all the frontline workers for providing services for management of COVID-19 as well as thanked partners for supporting the COVID-19 response in this pandemic and requested health partners for their continued support through one door mechanism.

Decisions/Action points:

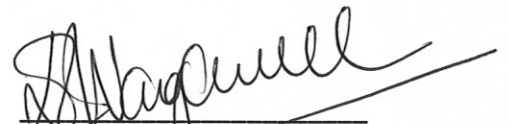
- Activation of ICS at provincial level and sharing possibility of the same in next meeting
- Provinces to provide feedback on guidelines rather than developing new guidelines
- Partners to follow one door mechanism when providing and reporting of COVID-19 response supports

Signed by the Chair:



Dr Gunaraj Lohani
Chair/Lead

10 May 2020



Dr Lungten Z. Wangchuk
Co-Chair/Co-Lead