

South Korea employs centralized coordination to fight pandemic

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Country's low health care worker infection rate offers valuable lessons for leaders



US based Ariadne Labs has released an Evidence Brief titled "[*Protecting Health Care Workers in South Korea During the COVID-19 Pandemic*](#)." The research, rapidly developed through interviews and a review of the country's protocols, outlines how South Korea has successfully maintained one of the world's lowest rates of COVID-19 infections in health care workers.

Health care workers around the world have been on the frontline of the battle against COVID-19. Given that hospitals are active battlegrounds for health care workers, protecting them is critical as their safety is tied to the integrity of the medical system and wellbeing of the public. Unfortunately, countries around the globe are struggling to minimize infection among this group.

This research details how South Korea continues to employ a multi-pronged strategy to protect health care workers, which involves centralized coordination and triage, local adaptation of key protocols and principles, and strong public health efforts to limit community transmission including physical distancing, contact tracing, and an aggressive approach to testing, isolation, and treatment.

Developed by Ariadne Labs' COVID-19 Community Mitigation Global Learnings team, the research was driven by June-Ho Kim, MD, MPH and a team of volunteers from Harvard University and the University of Massachusetts Medical School. It is the culmination of a rapid investigation, completed in less than a month, that draws on interviews with front-line health care workers and system leaders in South Korea, along with an in-depth review of national guidelines from Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) and hospital-level protocols.