

Letter to Editor

Donning and Doffing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The Training which was Never Imparted

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Corona Virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has taken the world by storm and shattered the global socioeconomic system. COVID-19 has challenged the health care systems across the world but the vulnerable health care systems of third world countries were the most effected of this calamity. Health care workers of Pakistan were the most affected subset of these positive patients. As of 30th June 2020, 5367 confirmed cases were reported amongst healthcare workers, 58 deaths have been documented and many suspected health care workers have isolated themselves till the results of their RT PCR tests.¹

There has been a wave of unrest and chaos amongst the health care workers amid the rising COVID-19 cases and on unavailability and non-provision of personal protective equipment to the frontline staff. Public criticism, media trial, proactive philanthropic participation, and foreign aid has helped replenish the already exhausted PPE stocks and somehow improved the miserable condition of unprotected health care workers.² There had been a paradigm shift of local textile industries towards domestic production of PPE suits and their supply attained the status of one of the most profitable businesses during the period of lockdown. Quality control of locally produced, smuggled and imported PPEs remained a question and might have added to the risk of exposure to infection of the health care workers.

The pacing crisis continued to cause panic among masses as the number rises. There had been a time restraint to formulate a comprehensive national action plan and its implementation in true letter and spirit. Training of high-risk health care workers regarding proper donning and doffing technique was one of the most important milestones, which was

ignored during the formulation of these guidelines. The Early non-availability of PPE Suits, followed by poor quality control of provided suits, untrained health care workers, and limited testing facility for COVID-19 were all the principal factors that added to the plight of frontline COVID-19 fighters.³

Way forward - Establishment of E-learning portals for health care workers and online free webinars/sessions on donning and doffing of PPE suits training should be introduced nationwide for the damage control. The need of the hour is formulation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure timely and effective training of all high-risk health care workers. Safety of the hospital health care staff should be prioritized to limit the great risk of infection to the exposed frontline fighters against the fast spreading viral infection.

References

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