



April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

## **Special Issue on Covid-19 by Ramaiah Group of Educational Institutions and Collaborators**

### **Background**

The Covid-19 pandemic in a short span of 4 months has affected more than 200 countries, infected over two million people and has killed close to 135000 cases. This pandemic has been a great leveller and has not spared the developed or the developing countries. New lessons are emerging every other day and entire global community has come together in an unprecedented way to combat this global public health crisis. Many academic institutions and nongovernmental organizations, from private and public have joined the Government at various levels and providing support in this combat. Experts from Ramaiah group of institutions are playing their part through providing strategic direction and field support to the local Government.

During these times such as pandemics, we face yet another challenge. Common public or the scientific community or the policy – everyone is overwhelmed with the information that comes in. In the times of social media, the information is probably moving around in competition with the virus, it seems like, and it is a challenge to cope up, consolidate and put up an action that is evidence based. Yet with the collective intelligence and efforts, while the issue at hand is somehow managed, the lack of intelligent synthesis and synergy of the new knowledge from diverse disciplines will lead to missed opportunities for learning and preparedness in future. These gaps are more glaring in countries such as ours and many others of similar settings.

Ramaiah group of institutions aims to address this void, through bringing out a special issue on Covid-19 that integrates evidence, experience and perspectives across a range of disciplines: basic sciences, epidemiology, clinical, public health, social sciences and others. In a pandemic situation, every country is putting up its fight through various public health strategies of which some work well and some wouldn't. What works well and what doesn't and why, what are the contextual issues? These are important lessons from a



global health perspective and country programs have to be well aware of them.

Ramaiah group recognizes the opportunity of cross learning in this context and intends to work with its international collaborators; University of Illinois, U.S.A and University of Manitoba, Canada. Centre for Global Health, University of Illinois is working with Ramaiah on several global health issues; they just completed an online survey of readiness of 15 low and middle income countries to tackle Corona pandemic; the team is actively responding to the Covid-19 crisis in many ways both in and outside U.S.A. University of Manitoba has been running a training program: International Infectious Disease and Global Health Training Program (IIDGHPT) and trains PhD and post-doctoral fellows across 4 sites: Canada, Columbia, Kenya and India, and across 4 disciplines: Basic Sciences, Epidemiology, Public Health and Clinical sciences. The students and the site leaders bring in a rich understanding and insight into infectious diseases in general and Corona in particular. Thus both the global health teams are uniquely positioned and can add significant value to Ramaiah' s efforts in the current context.

### **Publication scope and objectives**

The special issue on Covid-19 will compile articles from a wide range of disciplines: basic sciences, epidemiology, public health, clinical sciences. Each section will have specific chapters and tentative list of topics that are listed in the annexure. Both primary data papers as well as secondary data reviews, as well as expert opinions and perspectives will be published.

The broad goals of the publication are:

- To provide deeper insights and understanding of the Covid-19 from a multidisciplinary perspective, based on the current evidence
- To intelligently synthesize and summarise the learning and best practices of the countries from different contexts



- To provide food for thought and action to the global and national policy leadership in relation to readiness of countries to face Corona and other pandemics in future

The special publication will form a compendium or a book, forming a resource and a reference book for the government policy and programmers, scientific community, the faculty and doctoral students.

The book will be published with the publisher of an international repute to gain wider reach.

### **Publication plan and next steps**

*The publication will be positioned as an effort of the Ramaiah group of Educational Institutions so as to bring all the institutions under this effort in a synergistic manner. It is a great opportunity for all the institutions and the experts within, to collaborate and contribute to this project. Here is some guidance on how to go forward.*

A **central support team (CST)** is constituted to coordinate this project: Dr Krishnamurthy Jayanna, Dr Pushpanjali and Dr Nanda Kumar. They will be in touch with the institutional heads, the editors and the coordinating team identified within the institution.

Expectations from the Institution heads:

- Share the document and inspire the faculty to participate
- Identify a 2-3 editors at institutional level (**Institutional Editorial team - IET**). The guidelines will be shared with them on editorial protocols.
- Identify a coordination team (**Institutional coordination team-ICT**), to coordinate between the core team and the institutional team. The guidelines for ICT will be shared in the next communication.
- Facilitate access to relevant literature and secretarial support for the faculty as required



## Timelines and Responsibilities

Timelines are suggested to aid the institutional heads and their teams in planning effectively, while giving attention to quality of the articles.

#	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility
1	Send out communication to all department heads and the faculty	20 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Institutional heads
2	Finalize the editorial team and coordination team at institutional level and share the contacts with the support team	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Institutional heads
3	Connect with the editorial and coordination team and share guidelines/ protocols	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Central support team
4	Share author guidelines with authors who have expressed interest	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Institutional editors
5	Receive first draft of the article from the authors	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	Institutional editors
6	Receive the second draft of the article from the authors	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Institutional editors
7	Finalize the list of articles for publication	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Central Support team

## Publication themes and potential topics

These are tentative and suggestive. The institutional editors and authors are invited to add specific ideas/ topics under the relevant themes. They are requested to share the same with the support team.

Theme	#	Topic/ Sub-topics
<b>BASIC SCIENCES</b> (Microbiology, Genetics, laboratory, etc.)	1.1	Microbiological characteristics of Novel Corona Virus
	1.2	Virulence of India Covid-19 visa vis China, Europe, U.S
	1.3	Genomics and proteomics
	1.4	Challenges and opportunities in laboratory diagnosis of COVID-19

<b>EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SCIENCES</b> <b>(Epidemiology, Statistics, Surveillance, Data systems)</b>	2.1	Epidemiology of novel coronavirus (SARS-2)- global scenario and initial glimpses from India
	2.2	Widely varying Case Fatality Rate between the regions: What are some of the epidemiologic considerations and early inferences?
	2.3	What is the trajectory of the India Covid-19 pandemic, for a worse and best case scenario: Implications for planning lockdown
	2.4	Status of surveillance systems in the low and middle income countries to deal with Novel Corona pandemic: Effectiveness of Indian response to the covid-19 surveillance and Public Health Implications.
	2.5	Clinical and social-demographic profile of the Covid-19 deaths and recovered cases in India: what are lessons and opportunities for strengthening public health systems in the country?
<b>CLINICAL SCIENCES (Hospital, Dental and Nursing Care)</b>	3.1	Clinical manifestations and treatment guidelines
	3.2	Ongoing clinical and vaccines trials
	3.4	Nursing of the covid-19 and implications for safety of health care workers
	3.5	Dental profession and COVID-19 : Challenges faced, preparedness, management in different settings
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES (Policy, Programs, Social development)</b>	4.1	Health system readiness to deal with the pandemic in developing and developed country settings: Opportunities, challenges and lessons
	4.2	Social determinants and Inequities in the current context: globally, regionally, at country level
	4.3	Economic Implications due to novel Corona: Globally, Regionally and Nationally
	4.4	Technology for pandemic management- Telemedicine, Integrated IoT ecosystems, AI and machine learning for decision support algorithms
	4.5	Operational research and hospital administration- Issues for optimizing service delivery in times of Corona pandemic
	4.6	Integrative Health approaches for prevention and health promotion as part of public health response to the epidemic
	4.7	Information, Education and Communication during Pandemic: Opportunities, challenges, options and strategies.
	4.8	Capitalizing on other disciplines during such outbreaks- Need for Curriculum revisions



## **Queries and clarifications:**

Contact the support team members:

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