

THE IMPACT OF INTERPERSONAL TRUST IN KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOR OF PHYSICIANS IN TEACHING HOSPITAL

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ABSTRACT

The first patient with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) died in Toronto, Ontario, Canada on March 5, 2003. The index patient, who had recently visited Hong Kong, passed along the new variant corona virus to her family there. Her son died on March 13, 2003. Since Taiwan is geographically near to China and Hong Kong, areas with populations of 23 million, the SARS outbreak took off on April 23, 2003, at a municipal hospital in Taipei. The first patients went National Taiwan University hospital's emergency room (ER).

The hospital developed a system that enabled personnel to start working within 24 hours of the emerging epidemic. This system had to include 1) prominent communications and place a premium on the relationship between public health staff and hospital personnel, 2) an information technology platform that led to flow of data between jurisdictions, and 3) Forums and meetings held daily to exchange information.

Findings. The findings indicate that a hospital environment that facilitates communications and places a premium on relationship will do well in their knowledge sharing efforts. An information technology platform that supports the flow of data is vital. It is also imperative for hospitals to provide an opportunity to share information and knowledge at forums and meetings. In an emergency time, such as a pandemic, the information technology and meeting efforts would have to be ramped up and intensified, since there would be little opportunity to have fostered relationships.