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Letter to the Editor

COVID-19 and migrant workers: Lack of data and need for specific management



We found the publication entitled 'COVID-19: Immense necessity and challenges in meeting the needs of minorities, especially asylum seekers and undocumented migrants' to be very interesting.¹ The COVID-19 pandemic can affect any population, and minorities are the underprivileged group who are prone to many infections. In terms of COVID-19, there is currently no literature on disease among migrant minorities. Public health attention is required for disease control among minorities and migrants.² Here, the authors would like to share an observation from our own setting.

In Thailand, there are many migrant workers from nearby Indo-china countries. Based on the local available data on the COVID-19 outbreak, there are no cases in migrant workers. Although there are some active screening programs for migrant workers, there have been no COVID-19 cases, to date. Migrant workers may be more tolerant to infection, or there could be an underdiagnosis of disease because of limited medical services available for the migrant workers. If prevention strategies are not implemented or adhered to in this population, then disease outbreak is possible. Finally, we should bear in mind that we are seeing large outbreaks of COVID-19 in migrant worker communities in many other countries, such as Singapore and the Gulf states. Therefore, disease prevention for migrant worker communities is an important global public health issue.

References

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B. Joob*

Sanitation 1 Medical Academic Center, Bangkok, Thailand

V. Wiwanitkit

Dr DY Patil University, Pune, India

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: beuyjoob@hotmail.com (B. Joob).

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