

Shanxi teams join in fight to beat virus

More patients in Xiantao, Hubei province, are cured of infections as doctors remain vigilant

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Twenty-five patients cured of the novel coronavirus were released from the No 1 People's Hospital of Xiantao on Feb 10, thanks to the dedicated efforts and hard work of a medical rescue team from Shanxi province and doctor Yuan Dajiang in particular.

Yuan is the head of the medical rescue team that has traveled to Hubei province to help fight the novel coronavirus epidemic in the city of Xiantao.

Hubei is the province most severely hit by the coronavirus outbreak since December last year.

Since late January, Shanxi province in North China has dispatched six medical rescue teams to Hubei to help fight against the virus.

"The first patient we cured was discharged from the hospital three days ago," Yuan said, adding that "today is a big day for our team as so many patients are cured".

His colleague Ma Guanzhong was among the most joyful.

He showed the WeChat messages sent by the first released patient to the media, which were full of heart-felt gratitude.

"The patient was in a critical situation when we first saw him but he survived with a strong will," Ma said.

Ma was reluctant to say what treatment they gave the patient, only saying that he and his colleague are moved and motivated by the warmhearted greetings on WeChat.

"They (the medical team) are from Shanxi and they bring us hope," said a patient surnamed Dong.

Dong is a suspected coronavirus case quarantined in a hospital in the Hubei city of Qianjiang, which is looked after by another medical team from Shanxi. Dong said she feels better and more confident with the care of the Shanxi medical workers.

"When the epidemic is over, I will treat you to the most delicious crawfish in Qianjiang," Dong said to her medical care givers.

Qianjiang is famous around China for its freshwater crawfish.

The medical team in Qianjiang was among the first from Shanxi. The hospital where they are working is a new hospital that was scheduled to open in May.

The hospital became operational immediately in response to the emergency, after the team took three days to train local medical workers and test equipment.

"It is a miracle for our hospital considering the efficiency," said Song Shugui, the top nurse at the hospital.

"The standardized protective measures they carried out benefited not only the patients but the medical workers as well," Song said.

Standardized management is crucial to infectious disease control and treatment, according to Xue Wenlong, a doctor specializing in protective management for infectious diseases.

Xue, also from Shanxi, is now working at a makeshift hospital in Jiang'an district in Wuhan, capital of Hubei province.

The doctor said he is responsible for circulating operational standards among the doctors covering a



Clockwise from top: A doctor from Shanxi province treats a patient infected with the novel coronavirus pneumonia in a hospital in Xiantao, Hubei province. YUAN ZHAOHUI / FOR CHINA DAILY Workers at Shanxi-based Tongda Pharmaceuticals package medicine that will be delivered to virus-infected regions. WANG ZHONGXUN / FOR CHINA DAILY Jihua 3534 Garment based in Wenxi county, Shanxi province, works at full capacity to produce protective clothing in the fight against the epidemic nationwide. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

range of areas including the use of protective equipment, the layout of inpatient rooms, disinfection, non-contact service and medical waste treatment.

"The medical workers are the most precious wealth in this battle against the coronavirus epidemic, so we must ensure that they can work in safety," Xue said.

"I'm confident we will remain safe by following the strictest protective measures," said Li Shuping, a nurse from Shanxi now working at the Sino-French New Town Hospi-

tal in Caidian district of Wuhan.

Yuan Zhaohui, Jin Shuaini, Wang Yu and Shen Jia contributed to the story.

Keeping the lights on amid epidemic

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Because of the outbreak of the novel coronavirus epidemic, supplies in many parts of the country have been affected.

However, electricity supply to meet the demands of disease control and people's livelihoods throughout most of the country was not disrupted, according to industry insiders.

Coal suppliers in Shanxi have contributed to meet the national demand for power generation. This is despite a shortage of laborers due to the Spring Festival holiday and that the province has been affected by the epidemic, said local officials and business executives.

From the Gaohe coal mine operated by the Lu'an Group, one of the nation's leading coal suppliers based in Shanxi, more than 110,000 metric tons of coal has been transported to thermal power plants and other clients in Hubei, the center of the epidemic, according to Hao Xiaoguang, an executive in charge of coal transport at the company.

Shanxi Coking Coal Group is another major supplier of coal to Hubei.

"Since Jan 25 — the first day of the Lunar New Year — we have received requests from Hubei's power plants for increased coal delivery," said Wang Maosheng, chairman of the company.

"By Feb 6, production had been resumed in all of our 20 mines," Wang said.

He added that the company has an inventory of 2.86 million tons, which will be sold to its priority clients in Hubei and its home province of Shanxi.

According to Guo Baomin, head of the Shanxi Provincial State-Owned Assets Supervision



Commodities produced in Shanxi are delivered to Russia on the China-Europe express cargo train service, despite the novel coronavirus outbreak in China. REN LING / FOR CHINA DAILY



and Administration Commission, eight coal producers in Shanxi have been working extra shifts to supply coal to Hubei, Shanxi and other regions.

In addition, a number of coke, gas, water and chemical producers as well as logistics and transport companies have gone full capacity to ensure supplies to the regions, according to Guo.

"Considering the emergency, our focus is to produce products that meet the demands for disease control and people's daily necessities," added Guo.

Medical supplies are the first priority of manufacturers in Shanxi, said Li Jinping, head of the Shanxi Provincial Industrial and Information Department.

The official said the province had dispatched 28 batches of medical supplies to various regions in the country by Feb 6.

The Jihua 3534 Garment Co based in Wenxi county is one of the major manufacturers of protective clothing.

"We began to produce protective clothing on Feb 4 and to date we have a daily capacity of 1,000

medical protective garments and 4,000 non-medical protective garments," said Wang Qingcai, executive board director of the company.

As life becomes inconvenient in communities as a result of the lockdown to ensure disease control, the supply of daily necessities has become a pressing challenge.

To overcome this, many retailers in Shanxi have used both online and offline channels to expand supplies of daily goods.

They have vowed to offer customers products of a good quality, at a large volume and reasonable prices.

Chu Dequn, chairman of the local Meitehao Chainstore Co, said most of the goods at the company's outlets are sold at prices similar to those before Spring Festival.

"In addition, we ensure that at least six products at our stores will be sold at our purchase price everyday," Chu said.

According to Wang Hongjin, head of the Shanxi Provincial Department of Commerce, the province has kept a steady supply of such goods as cereals, cooking oil, pork, eggs, vegetables and beverages.

"We will keep on monitoring market situations to ensure our supplies in the future," Wang said.

Government calls for united efforts from local entities during outbreak

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The Shanxi Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China and the provincial government responded to the fight against the novel coronavirus this week, urging local social and economic entities to work together for disease control and maintaining steady socioeconomic development.

In their message that was released on Feb 10, the provincial authorities called on local entities to shoulder their own responsibilities and map out their own plans for disease control.

As most of the entities resume their operations after the Spring Festival holiday, they are required to track the travel history and record health conditions of their employees, helping identify possible suspected cases of the novel coronavirus infection and close contact with the infectious.

For local medical institutions, the goal is to ensure zero fatalities in confirmed cases and zero infection cases among medical workers.

The authorities also asked medical research institutions to step up their efforts in developing effective therapies and medicines for coronavirus patients.

Local businesses are also required to gradually normalize their business activities to ensure steady economic

Latest numbers of confirmed cases and recoveries in Shanxi province

According to the Health Commission of Shanxi Province on Feb 12, two confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus were reported in Shanxi: one in Datong and one in Jinzhong. Three patients were cured and discharged from hospitals.

As of midnight on Feb 12, a total of 126 confirmed cases of pneumonia caused by the novel coronavirus had been reported in Shanxi province.

In these 126 confirmed cases,

there were 36 in Jinzhong, 19 in Yuncheng, 18 in Taiyuan, 12 in Datong, eight in Jincheng, eight in Changzhi, seven in Xinzhou, seven in Shuozhou, six in Lyuliang, four in Yangquan and two in Linfen.

To date, a total of 3,579 close contacts have been traced in Shanxi province. Among them, 172 were released from medical observation on Feb 12 while 850 are under observation.

growth and meet the demands of the people.

The authorities called for mobilizing the wisdom and energy from all walks of life in fighting the epidemic.

Responding to the message, local entities have taken their own measures immediately.

According to local media reports, many companies and institutions have required their staff members to report their health conditions on a daily basis. They have implemented strict sanitation measures like disinfecting offices and business venues, and monitoring the body temperature of employees.

The Shanxi Provincial Science



Two men at Taiyuan Heavy Industry Railway Transit Equipment check on strict disease prevention measures to ensure the health of employees. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

and Technology Department proposed 15 measures in boosting medical research and development.

"To date, we have approved 14 projects for the R&D of medicines and therapies and the second batch of projects is in the pipeline," said an official at the department.

For Zhendong Group, a large health product retail and services company in Shanxi, its response to the message has been to ensure a stable supply of medical products to hospitals and health clinics.

"We have required all our outlets to stabilize supplies and make sure the prices are not higher than those before," said an executive of the company.

As of Feb 9, the company had donated 21.24 million yuan (\$3.05 million) worth of medicines and other supplies to medical institutions in 19 provinces and municipalities, according to the executive.

The People's Political Consultation Conference of Shanxi has held four meetings centering on the government message, asking for advice from all walks of life for fighting against the epidemic and stabilizing the economy.

A local political advisor said some constructive suggestions will be submitted to the local government.

Chen Junqi and Hu Yu contributed to the story.