Social protection and income maintenance for people with disabilities during COVID-19 pandemic in Taiwan

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Presentation outline

1. The conditions of COVID-19 pandemic in Taiwan
2. The impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the economic situations of people with disabilities
3. Government responses and measures
4. Conclusions
The conditions of COVID-19 pandemic in Taiwan – the trend of confirmed cases
The conditions of COVID-19 pandemic in Taiwan – confirmed cases as of Jan 27, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Cases</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Cases</td>
<td>893</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovered Cases</td>
<td>803</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases</td>
<td>993</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of 893 confirmed cases in Taiwan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imported</td>
<td>783</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally acquired</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy crew members aboard the Panshi Fast Combat Support Ship</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has unknown sources of infection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are infections on an aircraft</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

2021.01.27 MOHW of Taiwan
The impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the economic situations of people with disabilities – **direct impacts**

- **Those PwDs living on personal earnings could face:**
  - Employment redundancy
  - Reduction of working hours
  - Difficult to find new jobs - the duration of unemployment could be prolonged
  - Lack of incomes
  - Difficult to acquire government subsidies due to lack of social insurance or social assistance status
  - Extra expenditures for purchasing personal protective equipment, e.g. masks, gloves, cleaning stuff

- **Those PwDs living on family or care givers could face:**
  - Lack of incomes from family members or care givers
  - More rely on welfare benefits and family members
  - Extra expenditures for purchasing personal protective equipment
The impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the economic situations of people with disabilities – indirect impacts

Since some people with disabilities working in sheltered workshops, social enterprises or selling goods on streets, the impact of COVID-19 pandemic could have impacts on their business or organizations. For example

- The lack of business orders for sheltered workshops or social enterprises, e.g. conference meals, counselling service, etc.
- The drop of donations for disability organizations
- The shortage or tight control of cleaning work in hospitals and related institutions
- The prevention measures for COVID-19 could also have impacts on business, such as keeping social distance, temporarily shutting down day-care centers, prohibiting hospitals/nursing home visitors etc.
Government responses and measures for general population - 1

- **The Executive Yuan**
  - Issued the *triple stimulus vouchers* for all Taiwanese citizens in May 2020 in order to stimulate the economy. Disabled people with economically disadvantaged status could receive triple stimulus vouchers without pre-payment of NT$1,000.

- **The Ministry of Labor**
  - Subsidies and job training programs for workers suffering from the reduction of working hours
  - Tolerance for delays of paying labor/unemployment insurance premiums
  - Subsidized *tuition fees for the children* of unemployed workers
  - Subsidized *social or psychological programs for companies* to cope with stress and anxiety among employees
Government responses and measures for general population - 2

- The Ministry of Health and Welfare (National Health Insurance Administration)
  - Tolerance for delays of paying National Health Insurance premium
- The Ministry of Health and Welfare (Department of Social Assistance and Social Work)
  - Emergency subsidy of NT$10,000 for people whose living were seriously influenced by COVID-19 and not being covered by any social insurance or social assistance programs
  - Compensations for quarantine/isolation subjects and their caregivers due to epidemic prevention
The statistics of the implementation of the emergency subsidy program by the Executive Yuan, 2020/4/20~2020/7/12
Quarantine/isolation subjects and their caregivers compensation for epidemic prevention
Government responses and measures for PwDs and related organizations

- **The Ministry of Labor**
  - Rents of houses, lands or cars for sheltered workshops could be subsidized
  - Extra expenditures of protective equipment were allowed to be covered within the original budgets for sheltered workshops
  - Wage subsidies for people with visual impairments working as massage therapists

- **The Ministry of Health and Welfare (Department of Social Assistance and Social Work)**
  - Extra subsidy of NT$1,500 for economically disadvantaged PwDs from April to June, 2020

- **The local governments - New Taipei City Government as an example**
  - Home delivery of facial masks for people with mobility problems as well as living alone
  - Provision of protective equipment for disability facilities, such as masks, gloves, forehead thermometers etc.
Conclusions

- Because of lessons learned from SARS in 2003, Taiwan has carefully coped with COVID-19 in the first place, and thus the confirmed cases have been relatively small. Nevertheless, we still need to keep alerting before the pandemic has been well controlled.

- The confirmed cases of people with disabilities were unknown due to lack of related demographic statistics.

- The lives of PwDs have been directly or indirectly influenced by the pandemic. Apart from economic impacts, the social and psychological impacts should also be concerned, such as the accessibility to health information and the level of psychological well-being.

- The Taiwanese government has initiated a series of programs to cope with the impacts of the pandemic. Nevertheless, the effects of these measures are still waiting to be evaluated.


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10. 行無礙協會臉書. https://www.facebook.com/groups/115071131891716

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Thank you very much for your attention!