

UHS Response to COVID-19

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University of Health Sciences, Lahore Pakistan in line with its vision to be instrumental in creating a world free of disease and disability through revolution in Medical Education, Research and Service delivery is taking the lead in wake of the COVID 19 epidemic in all the three areas.

Research - PROTECT Trial

UHS launches its landmark Multicenter drug trial across the country titled "Pakistan Randomized and Observational Trial for Evaluation of COVID 19 Treatment (PROTECT)" registered with clinicaltrials.gov (Trial No. NCT04338698). This trial will primarily evaluate the efficacy of Hydroxychloroquine in the management of Covid-19 positive patients in Pakistan. This initiative is endorsed by Federal Taskforce on Science & Technology. Enrollment of patients is being done across the country. Vice Chancellor, Prof. Javed Akram, is the lead investigator of PROTECT along with UHS technical team that includes experts from Pharmacology, Microbiology, Forensic Sciences and Public Health departments. UHS team is supported by eminent Professors and Infectious Disease Consultants at different trial centers. All trial teams have been trained on Good Clinical Practices via video link and an online data collection system has been established for facilitation of researchers and to minimize the paperwork for this study. It is expected that findings would offer answers or raise pertinent questions to help develop an evidence-based management protocol for COVID-19 patients.

Research - SARS-COV-2 Mutation Browser

Department of Forensic Sciences, UHS has developed SARS-CoV-2 mutation browser (<http://covid-19.dnageography.com>); one stop

resource for researchers around the world who wish to explore quality assured mutational data and their impact regarding SARS-CoV-2. The browser also includes mutational profiles from Pakistani isolates.

Service Delivery - National Telemedicine Centre for COVID 19 Control

UHS under the leadership of the Chancellor of the university has set up twenty-five (25) telemedicine centers across Punjab. The centers have also been established in Islamabad, Baluchistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir. So far more than 125000 calls and Telemedicine consultations have been successfully completed, the suspected cases referred for tests are 1253 out of which 375 tests came out as positive. Under the guidance of the Vice Chancellor, a female "PINK Telemedicine Centre" as part of National telemedicine program has also been established within the university.

Medical Education - Distance Learning

The faculty, staff and students of the university are actively engaged in online education through the university's learning management system. G-Suite for education is being employed for teaching and learning of students both at undergraduate and postgraduate level including PhD taught courses. The MS teams' resource is being employed to conduct synchronous online education in collaboration with Higher Education Commission of Pakistan within the University with services offered to undergraduate constituent and affiliated institutions. To develop trained telemedicine facilitators in wake of the Pandemic an intensive four-week online Telemedicine Facilitator certificate course for health care professionals in collaboration with foreign faculty is being launched. This first of its kind training will develop the required workforce for short term and long term running of the telemedicine centers across the country.

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