

(a) Paper Title: Sharing Information in Times of Crisis: A Case Study of Knowledge Sharing Among Physicians, Public Sector, and Society

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(c) A description of the paper, including the rationale for its inclusion in the conference and fit with the overall conference theme.

The liberal French philosopher and journalist Raymond Aron (1905 – 1983) said “When knowledge accumulates ceaselessly but at random, it increases the desire for a system.” This statement manifests itself in the development of systems that hospitals and the public sector require to share information during times of crisis.

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 to National Taiwan University hospital’s emergency room (ER).

During the outbreak, the biggest challenge was deficiencies in personnel in terms of numbers and skills. Because of the epidemic, the hospital developed a system that enabled personnel to start working within 24 hours of the emerging epidemic. This system included prominent communications and placed a premium on the relationship between public health staff and hospital personnel. It called for an information technology (IT) platform that led to flow of data between jurisdictions, and hospital personnel held forums and meetings daily to exchange information. Medical knowledge is most valuable when it is collective, and it is constantly updated as physicians learn,

gain experience, have insights, and share ideas. In light of recent pandemics and threats of pandemics, this paper also considers ways to share knowledge across organizations throughout the world.

The key findings of the paper indicate the importance of trust, particularly the factors of predictability, integrity, competence, and responsibility. We discuss the artifacts of establishing trust in a short time and the importance for partners to prepare in advance, since in a pandemic there would not be time to foster relationships.

This paper fits with the conference focus because it advocates that in order for medical knowledge to be shared requires multi-organizational partnerships, alliances, and networks. Our study reveals the organizational structures, processes, and practices that need to be in place in a hospital to enable collaboration. Organizational change was required, and the process is heavily influenced by medical culture.

List 4 key words with your abstract: Health care systems; knowledge sharing; trust, information technology.