

Press Release



Ministry of Health and Welfare,
Republic of Korea

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MOHW's Revision of 'Medical Emergency Response Manual for Disaster Management' to Effectively Respond to Disasters and Accidents with Mass Casualties

On November 24 (Friday), the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW, Minister Cho, KyooHong) and the National Emergency Medical Center **announced its revision of the 'Medical Emergency Response Manual for Disaster Management' (hereinafter referred to as the "Emergency Response Manual") to systematize medical emergency response to disasters when an accident occurs with multiple casualties.**

The above revision of the manual **focused on increasing the speed and expertise of disaster response and standardizing a rational dispatch and treatment measures/procedures to institutionalize improvements to the disaster emergency medical system in the aftermath of the Itaewon tragedy.**

The main contents of the emergency response manual revisions are as follows.

① **(Disaster medical response standards)** To ensure a timely response by the Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) and rapid response team to provide onsite emergency medical care, the dispatch standards were linked to the response phases of the National Fire Agency, and revisions were made to standards to prompt a dispatch in event of a risk of mass casualties.

② **(Onsite response capability)** Communication efficiency is improved by utilizing the disaster safety network jointly used by related ministries such as the Ministry of the Interior & Safety, the National Fire Agency, and the National Police Agency, and education/training for public health center directors has been institutionalized. Also, the foundation for expert medical response has been set by enlisting designated doctors as specialists to be dispatched to the scene.

③ (Governance) MOHW is tasked with the role of coordinating and mobilizing disaster medical resources in the event of a disaster, while city and provincial municipalities are required to establish in-advance action plans for a mass casualty incident, strengthening disaster prevention and response capabilities.

④ (Standard for dispatch & treatment) To ensure that the principle of prioritizing serious casualties (in the order of urgent > emergency > non-emergency > fatality) is observed, CPR can be withheld under the guidance of a physician, and the medical role of the onsite emergency clinic can be delegated to the disaster medical assistance team for the purpose of administering an appropriate and rational medical response at the scene.

The full manual can be viewed on the Ministry of Health & Welfare website (www.mohw.go.kr).

Director General of Public Health Policy Park Hyang at the MOHW stated, “We’ve reflected the feedback from the field for a more systematic disaster medical response,” and underscored, “We will provide ongoing education/training to public health centers and disaster base hospitals for the revisions at hand to be carried out in the field.”///