

Why is 'letting Covid-19 spread to create community immunity' is an extremely dangerous view?

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In recent days, on the social network, there has been an announcement that epidemic control measures in Vietnam such as school closures, cessation of exploitation of some international routes and especially quarantine isolation are too necessary level.

This view suggests that the spread of viruses to create rapid immunity in the community is something that some western countries are applying. However, Deputy Minister of Health Nguyen Thanh Long. The deputy director of the National Steering Committee for the Prevention of Epidemic Covid-19 officially rejected this information.

"Vietnam cannot do that because its potential is not enough to cope with the increasing number of infected people. Especially with the group of weak health, the elderly cannot afford to cope when Vietnam has not much nursing homes, every family has the elderly, young people live together ," he explained.

Deputy Minister Long emphasized that only control to slow the spread and spread of the epidemic is a good solution and helps prevent the epidemic successfully.

Even western countries like the United States have now begun to take strong interventions, including closing routes to Europe.

At a press conference earlier this week, Deborah Birx, White House corona virus response coordinator and Anthony Fauci, director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, also issued a set of guidelines for real Americans. implementing hygiene measures and keeping social distance to minimize the risk of spreading Covid-19 in the community.

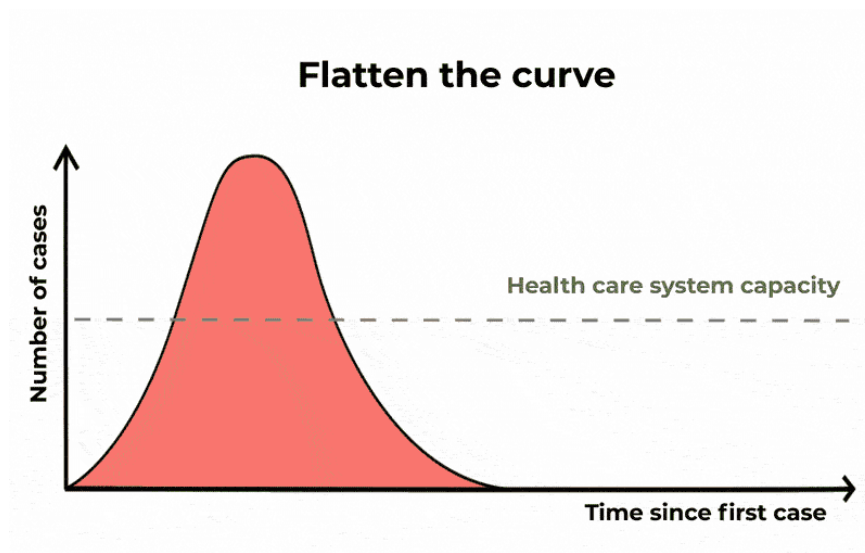
Many of these are measures that Vietnam has adopted since the beginning of the epidemic - the golden time to implement these measures.

Measures to keep social distance include mandatory isolation for those who have been infected, tracing and contacting people who have been in contact with sick people, quarantining those who may have been exposed, closing schools, study, business when needed and avoid activities that gather in crowds .

The goal of these measures is to *"flatten the curve"* , delay epidemic peaks and limit overcrowding for hospitals.

On the contrary, letting the virus spread naturally and strongly in the community although it can create community immunity and make the virus disappear quickly, however, it will overload our health system.

because there will be more sick people, more severe cases and certainly more deaths.



A study by Australian epidemiologists emphasized the importance of hygiene measures and social distance:

" We recommend that low-cost interventions be implemented before the disease appears and that contagion is expected in the community. These interventions should be considered as they can help reduce the overall number of cases and severity of cases , "the authors wrote.

The measures are designed on two principles: keeping social distance and improving sanitation. According to this research model, this could delay epidemics, limit the overload for hospitals and intensive care units.

It allows health care workers to have better time to take care of patients, or when they themselves are infected with Covid-19, they can recover and return to work. Delaying the peak of the epidemic may also help hold on until we have a vaccine to deal with Covid-19.

The " *flattening curve* " mentioned here is to delay and lower the peak of the epidemic to below the level that the health system can meet. If the virus spreads naturally, the health care systems of every country, even the United

States can be overloaded when emergency rooms and hospitals will be flooded with respiratory failure patients because of Covid -19.

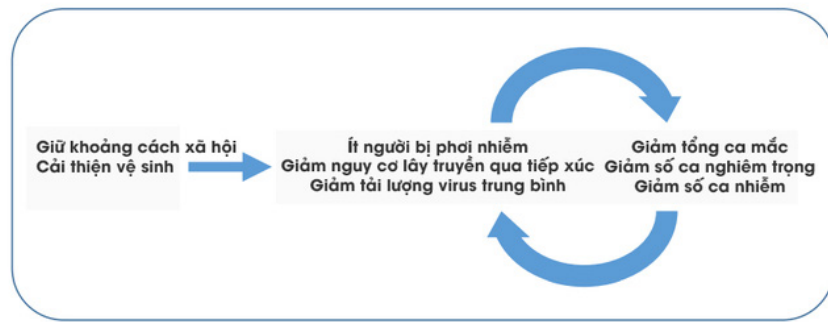


Figure 2: Conceptual model of how pre-emptive interventions with a negative multiplier effect could impact an impending epidemic

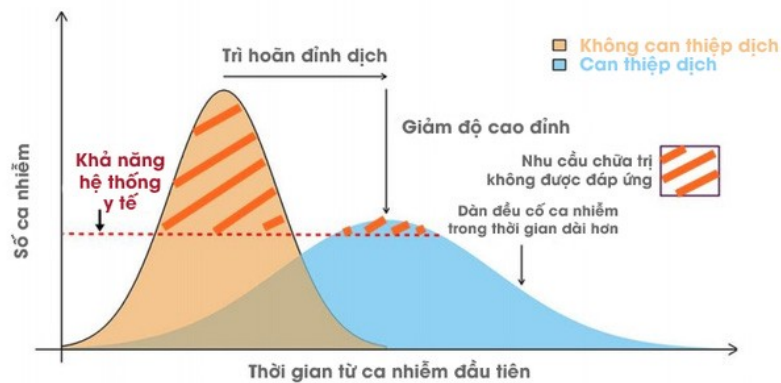


Figure 1: Intended impact of enhanced hygiene and social distancing measures on the COVID-19 pandemic adapted from Fong.⁸

A 2015 New York state statistic showed that they had 7,241 ventilators in operation and 1,750 in stock. Breathing machines are especially needed to treat severe symptoms of Covid-19, in which the patient has severe respiratory failure.

However, in the event of an influenza pandemic, New York state says it has set aside only 15% of the ventilator to take care of new patients, because existing ventilators are currently serving patients suffering from other ailments before.

In the limited conditions and capacity of the health system, smoothing the curve and delaying epidemic peaks are of utmost importance.

To do this, every country must take every measure it can in the Covid-19 pandemic. " We need to remember that if we act early and decisively, we can slow down the virus and prevent infection, " World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom said in a comment.

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