WP1: COVID-19 Timeline of the Japanese context
Changes in policy, epidemic and communication strategies and activities

Area:
[Pol] = Policy
[Comm] = Communication
[Epi] = Epidemiological point

Category:
[Digital] = Digital contact-tracing /App
[Quar] = Quarantine
[Fin.sup] = Financial support


January 8, 2020: WHO announced China Wuhan Pneumonia “The possibility of a new virus cannot be denied”

January 14, 2020: WHO confirmed a new coronavirus

January 15, 2020: First infected confirmed in Japan. A Chinese national male in his 30s who lived in Kanagawa Prefecture, who had traveled to Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, had a fever on January 3. After returning to Japan, he was hospitalized and examined by the National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID), and as a result, infection with the new coronavirus was confirmed. This is the first time that an infected person has been confirmed in Japan. (Infection confirmation was January 15, the announcement was January 16)

January 17, 2020: The epidemiological survey implementation guidelines for the novel coronavirus (nCoV) (provisional version) was issued by the NIID.

January 26, 2020: All group travels from China cancelled. Following the spread of the new coronavirus infection in China, Chinese travel agencies have decided to suspend group travel abroad, including Japan, for the time being from the 27th. Since many tourists from China visit Japan, it is expected that the Japanese tourism industry will be greatly affected.

January 26, 2020: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan (MoFA) talks with China to evacuate Japanese people such as Wuhan Charter aircraft operation. As the infection of the new coronavirus spreads mainly in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, it was found that the MoFA has begun discussions with the Chinese government to evacuate the Japanese staying in the area. Coordinating, including flying private charter planes, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the embassy to contact anyone who wishes to return home.

January 28, 2020: [Pol] The Cabinet promulgated “the Cabinet Order such as stipulating new coronavirus infectious diseases as designated infectious diseases” based on the provisions of Article 6, Clause 8; Article 7, Clause 1; and Article 66 of the Act on the Prevention of Infectious Diseases and Medical Care for Patients with Infectious Diseases (Act No. 114 of 1998) (hereinafter “the Infectious Diseases Control Law”). With this, the novel coronavirus disease was classified as a designated infectious disease.

In Japan, infectious diseases are placed into one of eight categories: Category I through Category V and three others for those that have the potential to affect the lives of people through their rapid spread. Category I, such as Ebola, is considered the most dangerous, while Category II includes tuberculosis.
With the Cabinet Order above, the coronavirus (COVID-19) had been categorized as a new influenza infection, entailing some countermeasures that are on par with those for Category II. It allows the government to impose strict countermeasures, such as ordering infected patients to be quarantined or admitted to designated hospitals, and restrictions on work to prevent further spread of the disease. The categorization also empowers the government to ask people to refrain from unnecessary outings.

January 28, 2020: MHLW started to implement the virus inspection tests of the new pneumonia at the quarantine station in airports and harbours.

January 28, 2020: The first charter flight departed Haneda Airport for Wuhan at 20:00.

January 29, 2020: Of the 206 people who returned from Wuhan (first charter flight returnees), 5 had some symptoms (as a result of interviews and medical examinations by in-flight quarantine, 4 had a fever. After disembarking, one person had nausea while waiting at the airport) and was taken to a medical institution. After being hospitalized, these five patients were hospitalized, and on the same day, a pharyngeal swab sample for PCR testing of the new coronavirus was collected, and all were found to be negative. Of these, one was negative on 29 January, but pneumonia was confirmed on the same day, so a PCR test on the sputum sample collected revealed that it was positive on 31 January. The remaining four were discharged after their symptoms had improved and entered accommodation for follow-up.


January 30, 2020: The novel coronavirus response headquarter was set up within the Cabinet.

January 31, 2020: The third charter flight arrived back in the morning.

February 1, 2020: Diamond Princess (DP), a cruise boat, departed from Naha Port, Okinawa, Japan.

February 2, 2020: The Hong Kong government reported to the International Health Regulation (IHR) that a passenger who got off DP at Hong Kong Port on 25th January was found tested-positive of the novel coronavirus, and IHR informed the Japanese government.

February 3, 2020: Based on the classification of the novel coronavirus (Jan. 28), MHLW revised the standards for notification to prefectural governors for doctors and designated medical institution managers based on Clause 1, Article 12 and Clause 2, Article 14 of the Infectious Diseases Control Law. The ministry established standards for implementing PCR and other tests. These standards were used when the coronavirus consultation centers arranged examinations at “returnees/contact persons” outpatient services at hospitals on inquiries by people who suspected COVID-19 infection.

In consideration of the shortage of PCR and other testing and analysis capacity, these standards limited the scope of the tests in order to concentrate the testing resources on those who need hospitalization or treatment, such as those with severe symptoms. The reasons for limiting the range of subjects for PCR and other tests were:

1) It was necessary to use the limited resources efficiently under the restrictions on PCR and other tests/analysis capacity;
2) Attempting to detect all infections was not effective in then-situation when the pre-test probability (probable positive rate prior to testing) was not proven to be high enough; and
3) There was a concern that outpatient services at hospitals for “returnees and contact persons” would be flooded by those who suspected infection.
The standards were used when the coronavirus consultation centers, which were consulted by people who suspected COVID-19 infection, arranged for examination at “returnees/contact persons” outpatient services at hospitals.

**February 3, 2020:** DP arrived at Yokohama Port, Japan

**February 5, 2020:** The Japanese government persuaded the DP Captain to anchor offshore, and the Captain agreed.

**February 6, 2020:** [Pol] The Japanese government decided not to permit all the passengers and crews to land. The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) requested the DP not enter Yokohama Port. Also, the Japanese government started to dispatch DMAT (Disaster Medical Assistance Team), the SDF (Self-Defence Forces), DICT (Disaster Infection Control Team, experts of infectious diseases), DPAT (Disaster Psychiatric Assistance Team)

**February 6, 2020:** The fourth charter flight departed Haneda for Wuhan at 20:33.

**February 7, 2020:** The fourth charter flight arrived back at Haneda in the morning

**February 7, 2020:** Behavioural change policies avoiding the “3 Cs (Closed spaces, Crowded places, Close-contact settings)” were announced.

**February 11, 2020:** PCR tests to all the PD passengers started.

**February 13, 2020:** The first death of the infected in Japan: A female in her 80s in Kanagawa Prefecture (next to Tokyo Metropolitan area)

**February 13, 2020:** [Pol] MHLW decided to expand the scope of virus testing not only to people who have a staying history in Hubei Province, China, but also those who had stayed in Zhejiang Province and have symptoms.

The government began the measure to deny entries of foreigners who had stayed in Zhejiang Province within 14 days before the immigration application from the 13th, unless there are special circumstances.

**February 13, 2020:** The government coordinated emergency responses. They included to prevent and diagnose by promoting the development of simple test kits and vaccines, to establish treatment methods, and to secure 500 billion Japanese yen to provide emergency loans as financial support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

**February 13, 2020:** [Pol] The government's response headquarters formulated and publicized “the urgent response measures for the novel coronavirus” as measures to be taken urgently giving priority to protecting the lives and health of the people. This was the first economic measure by the government in the COVID-19 crisis. It was totaling more than 15 billion Japanese yen, including prevention and diagnosis by promoting the development of vaccines and aiming to establish a treatment method. Prime Minister Abe instructed Ministers to take immediate action. Below is the overview.

**Basic policy**

As a basic policy, the government is to take all necessary measures with the highest priority on protecting the lives and health of the people. In addition to the execution of this year’s budget, they planned to utilize a reserve fund of 10.3 billion yen to implement countermeasures totaling 15.3 billion yen.

(1) Support for returnees (3 billion yen)
- Support for acceptance of returnees and their smooth rehabilitation, etc. (2.34 billion yen)
- Support for life and health management and ensuring the safety by the Ministry of Defense etc. (320 million yen)

As support for those who returned from Wuhan, China by charter plane, and passengers and crew of DP confirmed infected, the government is to provide relief supplies etc. to ensure living support and their health management. The government is responsible for the cost of virus testing and health examinations.

(2) Strengthening domestic infection control measures (6.5 billion yen)
- Strengthening the rapid testing and medical system, etc. (3.06 billion yen)
- Setup outpatient service for returnees/close contacts and consultation centers (510 million yen)
- Promotion of research and development of test kits, antiviral drugs, vaccines, etc. (1 billion yen)
- International vaccine research and development support project (1.07 billion yen)
- Ensuring a quick and smooth supply system for masks, pharmaceuticals, etc. (450 million yen)

NIID is to establish a system to significantly increase the number of samples that can be judged at one time. Also, 83 local health laboratories nationwide are to aim for prompt inspection. In addition, in order to strengthen the treatment system, the National Center for Global Health and Medicine is to accelerate the development of treatment methods for critically ill patients. The government requests each prefecture to set up an outpatient clinic to examine people suspected of being infected. The government is to provide the necessary financial support.

Furthermore, the government will promote the development of simple test kits, antiviral drugs, vaccines, etc. in collaboration with private companies, aiming to establish prevention, diagnosis, and treatment methods. The government also requests manufacturers to increase production, create an environment where sufficient quantities can be continuously supplied, and there is a shortage of medical masks for each prefecture.

(3) Strengthening border measures (3.4 billion yen)
- Measures to prevent the infection spread when symptomatic cases occur (3.02 billion yen)
- Strengthening testing systems and functions of quarantine stations nationwide (340 million yen)

The strict immigration and quarantine are to be thoroughly enforced, and domestic measures will be strengthened in anticipation of the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics.

(4) Response to affected industries (600 million yen)
- Setup call centers (490 million yen)
- Employment Adjustment Subsidies\(^1\) including measures for SMEs and small businesses etc. (100 million yen)

The Japan Finance Corporation and other organizations are to provide financial support to SMEs whose business performance is temporarily deteriorating, including the tourism industry. The government is to secure 500 billion yen for urgent lending and guarantee. The government is to relax the requirements for Employment Adjustment Subsidies prioritizing the enterprises that make capital investment and have been affected by the decrease in traffic between Japan and China.

(5) Strengthening international cooperation (1.8 billion yen)
- Contribution to the enhancement of testing systems in Asian countries (1.65 billion yen)
- Support through NGOs/NPOs etc. (100 million yen)

NIID is to donate viruses that successfully isolated and cultivated for research and development to Asian countries free of charge. The government is to provide medical equipment and materials to Asian countries and contribute to the enhancement of the inspection system as well as to understand

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\(^1\) Employment adjustment subsidies are based on Article 62 (Employment Stabilization Program), the Employment Insurance Act (Law number: Act No.116 of 1974, Amendment of Act No. 30 of 2007). The “Employment Adjustment Subsidy” is a system in which the government subsidizes part of the allowance for companies so that they do not dismiss employees even if sales or production decrease, but adjust employment by taking leave or seconding.
international infection trends through collaboration with each country and region. Also, Support for international cooperation by NPOs, etc., is to be strengthened.

**February 14, 2020:** JMAT (Japan Medical Association Team) joined DP.

**February 14, 2020:** First domestic case of the COVID-19 infection found.

**February 14, 2020:** Komeito Party, the junior partner in the ruling coalition party, urged the government to set up a panel of experts under either Prime Minister Abe or the Health Minister Katsunobu Kato to analyze the current situation of COVID-19 infections and weigh the countermeasures.

In response to this request, the government decided to set up the Expert Meeting on the Novel Coronavirus Disease Control (the expert panel) under its COVID-19 response headquarters. The panel of experts was established by transferring the advisory board, set up under the health ministry’s COVID-19 headquarters, to the government’s headquarters. It was launched with 12 members. The expert panel was set up for the purpose of analyzing the novel coronavirus disease and making recommendations for behavioral change policies. Although it was expected to play an important role in government policy making, it had no clear legal basis as an organization.

**February 15, 2020:** MHLW decided to provide an urgent loan totaling 500 billion yen to SMEs such as restaurants and hotels whose business performance is temporarily deteriorating by the influence of COVID-19.

**February 15, 2020:** LINE, a private sector company of the major communication app, opened an official account “New Coronavirus Infectious Disease Information Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare” at the request of the health ministry. When a user sends a question through the LINE app, AI will answer about the status of the new coronavirus outbreak and preventive measures based on information from the MHLW and local governments. Users can also use the service to consult a doctor directly from the same official account. According to LINE, more than 50,000 people have registered by February 14.

The company that provides the application “LEBER” that allows users to consult with a doctor using a smartphone free of charge only for questions about the new coronavirus (normally they charge for any service). With this app, users can enter your symptoms while interacting with AI in chat, and a few minutes later you will receive a message from the actual doctor. For free consultation, it is necessary to download the application from a specifically dedicated URL. Questions about the new coronavirus are accepted until 10 April 2020 free of charge.

**Mid-February:** In addition to surveying people who had come into contact with infected people after the onset of their symptoms in other countries (prospective survey), the survey in Japan was also conducted on people who came into contact with the patients before the onset of the disease (retrospective survey). However, the retrospective survey unique to Japan required a great deal of manpower and know-how, and MHLW assisted in active epidemiological surveys including in response to requests from prefectures. In order to analyze the results in detail, it was recognized that it was necessary to increase the manpower of people conducting the surveys. Against this background, the MHLW decided to set up a cluster task force with key members from Tohoku University, staff from the National Institute of Infectious Diseases, graduates of the National Institute of Infectious Diseases Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP), university professors and staff.

**February 16, 2020:** MHLW relaxed the requirements for the “Employment Adjustment Subsidy” for companies whose management has deteriorated. The Employment Adjustment Subsidy” subsidizes a part of the allowance when a company whose management has deteriorated temporarily takes a leave of absence without dismissing the employee. Specifically, for business establishments that had been closed since the 24th of last month (especially the tourism industry), the period for comparing the decrease in sales from the previous year for the payment requirements was shortened from the last 3 months to 1 month.
February 16, 2020: [Comm] MHLW decided to make telephone consultations available 24 hours in all prefectures and to increase the number of outpatient clinics for people suspected of being infected. MHLW also decided to increase the number of medical institutions that have dedicated outpatient services by more than 100 to about 800.

February 16, 2020: [Epi] The number confirmed infected in Japan: 414 (including 355 passengers of DP)

- 355 passengers and crew of the DP,
- 1 quarantine officer,
- 1 rescuer,
- 13 people who returned to Japan by charter plane,
- 44 others

February 16, 2020: The fifth charter flight departed Haneda Airport for Wuhan at 20:33.

February 17, 2020: The fifth chartered flight arrived at Haneda Airport at 6:50 am (36 Japanese nationals and 29 Chinese nationals returned).

February 17, 2020: [Manual] MHLW compiled a guideline for what kind of symptoms should be consulted, and announced as follows:

- If you have cold symptoms such as fever, refrain from going to school/work and going out.
- We call on you to measure and record your body temperature every day.

If symptoms persist, instead of seeing a medical institution immediately, first consult with the Returnee / Contact Counselling Center by phone. In addition, the consultation center will coordinate visits to dedicated outpatient clinics as necessary.

Guideline for consulting with the Returnee / Contact Consultation Center

- People who have cold symptoms or fever of 37.5 degrees or more for 4 days or more, or who have to continue taking antipyretics.
- There is strong dullness and suffocation.

In addition, the following people are apt to become seriously ill when infected, so MHLW called for consultation even if the above conditions continue for about 2 days.

- Elderly people
- People with diabetes, heart failure, respiratory diseases, or undergoing dialysis,
- People receiving immunosuppressive drugs and anticancer drugs
- Pregnant women also consult early just in case

As for children, there are no reports that they are likely to become seriously ill at this time, and we are calling for the general public to take appropriate measures.

Request when going to a medical institution after consultation

- Refrain from visiting a medical institution recommended by the Returnee / Contact Consultation Center and refraining from visiting multiple medical institutions.
- When visiting a medical institution, wear a mask and thoroughly wash your hands and cough etiquette.

February 17, 2020: [Epi] Minister of MHLW, Kato revealed that as a result of expanding the virus inspection system, more than 3,000 inspections per day have become possible in Japan.

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2 The “Returnee / Contact Consultation Center” is a dedicated contact point for telephone consultations from people suspected of being infected.

As of February 16, 2020, there are 536 consultation centers nationwide, including health centers nationwide, and at least one in each prefecture is available 24 hours a day.
The daily processing capacity at this point is up to 400 cases at the NIID, 580 cases at the quarantine stations in each region, and 1,800 cases at the Prefectural Health Research Institute.

**February 18, 2020:** [Comm] Minister of MHLW, Kato said at a press conference, “There was no opinion that large-scale events need to be cancelled at the expert meeting held the other day. Therefore, the organizers of each event will make appropriate decisions. We hope that people with cold symptoms should refrain from participating, encourage them to wear masks, and wash their hands and fingers.”

[Comm] Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Hagita said, “We are not thinking about requesting uniform cancellation of school events such as graduation ceremonies at this stage. I would like to ask all to create an appropriate environment, including diligent ventilation of the venue and encouraging temperature control with clothes.”

**February 19, 2020:** DP passengers and crews (approx. 500 people on 19th) started to disembark. As of noon, on the 17th, there were 3,100 crew members and passengers left on board. MHLW conducted a virus test on all of them, and decided to have those who had negative results and no symptoms disembark sequentially from 19th when the 14-day health observation period ends.

**February 21, 2020:** [Pol] The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and MHLW summarized measures to be taken at schools and nursery schools, such as suspension of attendance and temporary closure when children and students are infected with the new coronavirus. The Ministries also notified that the prefectural government can request a temporary closure of the entire school or some grades if the prefectural government deeded it necessary. On the other hand, there are no measures to suspend attendance at nursery schools, so MHLW requested parents to refrain infected children from going to the nursery school. If the prefecture deems it necessary, the prefectural government can request a temporary closure.

**February 23, 2020:** [Pol] MHLW decided to check the health status of all other people who disembarked the DP by telephone every day for 14 days from the day after their disembarking because the infection was confirmed for the first time by the person who disembarked with a negative virus test on the cruise ship (e.g., to check for body temperature, sore throat, and feelings of dullness. Also MHLW advised to refrain from going out unnecessarily and urgently, and to consult in case of any abnormalities in their physical condition).

**February 24, 2020:** [Pol] [Epi] The expert panel stated that the purpose of the proposed policies was not to contain the epidemic but to put the infections under control at an early stage, and made the following recommendations:

- Closed spaces are a risk factor, and ventilation is important. There is a risk when
  1) people are in arm’s reach;
  2) you stay for a long time; and
  3) the space is crowded.
- There is a risk of spreading infection in an environment where face-to-face close contact (within arm’s reach) continues for a certain period of time, such as a conversation, and is exchanged with many people.
- We are most concerned about the continuous occurrence of infections from one person to many in various places.

[Comm] The above recommendations were announced on this day for realizing the basic policy for COVID-19, with the experts holding a news conference to directly communicate to people the results of their expert analysis. The high-risk environment cited in these views included the elements of Closed, Crowded and close-Contact that would later become widespread among the public as the “3 Cs.”

**February 25, 2020:** [Pol] MHLW established the “Cluster Countermeasure Group.”
Since there is a suspicion that “clusters” had occurred in various places, NHLW decided to set up a new countermeasure group of about 30 people, including the NIID experts and university researchers, and dispatch them to the site.

**February 25, 2020:** Chairman Mr. Iizumi of the National Governors’ Association held a press conference in Tokyo and issued an urgent statement calling on the national government to take effective measures in full cooperation with local governments. The statement required the national government to provide all prefectures with information on infected persons and routes, and to present a unified standard for information disclosure.

**February 26-28, 2020:** For several days after 25th, a team (led by Prof. Hiroshi Nishiura, Hokkaido University) of the cluster task force took the lead in analyzing 110 cases of domestic infections, and came to recognize the characteristic of COVID-19 that 80% of the infected did not infect others.

**February 26-28, 2020:** [Comm] [Epi] Through analysis of epidemiological surveys by public health nurses and the cluster task force, it also emerged that a major factor causing the outbreak of clusters was a situation in which a large number of people gathered in a closed environment and engaged in close-range conversations. Similarly, it was pointed out that examples of conspicuous clusters tended to involve activities that increase the volume of people’s ventilation (such as workout at sports gyms, etc.), activities in which people speak or sing in loud voices (live music clubs or karaoke) and environments where one person came into contact with an unspecified number of people (restaurant/bar business involving service to customers), and so on.

**February 27, 2020:** [Pol] Prime Minister Abe announced a request to close elementary, junior high and high schools nationwide. This caused many parents to take leave of absence from work and great financial damage to them. Also, the impact on regional economies was expected as it would put people more self-restraint about daily movement and activities.

**February 29, 2020:** [Pol] Prime Minister Abe requested for a temporary closure of schools nationwide, and called for understanding and cooperation to people toward the end of the infection. For this, the Cabinet Office and the MHLW also issued a notice to subsidize the cost in case they operate after-school childcare from the morning due to an increase of demand in each prefecture.

**March 1, 2020:** All DP passengers disembarked.

**March 1, 2020:** [Comm] Based on these analysis results, the MHLW published a document entitled Preventing outbreaks of COVID-19.

**March 1, 2020:** [Fin.sup] MHLW expanded the scope of the “Employment Adjustment Subsidy” to maintain the employment of companies whose business performance had been affected by the new coronavirus.

The business closure period is after January 24, 2020, and if it is until the end of May, the subsidy will be accepted even if the plan is submitted after the fact.

**March 2, 2020:** [Pol] [Epi] The national government decided that virus testing will be given priority to the severely ill and not to the mildly ill in order to secure a medical system for the severely ill if the number of patients increases significantly in the future and spreads in the area.

Currently, all people who had been confirmed infected had been hospitalized at this stage, but if there is a risk that there will be insufficient beds to accept, mildly ill people will be treated at home. MHLW requested local governments to make a decision according to the situation in each region since the medical system differs depending on the region and carefully explain to residents.

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3 From August 2020 to present, Kyoto University
March 4, 2020: [Pol] Prime Minister Abe met individually with the leaders of the five opposition parties, and called for cooperation in the early enactment of a bill that would enable a “state of emergency” in preparation for further spread of infection. Opposition parties expressed their intention to cooperate in efforts to prevent the spread of infection, while there was an opinion calling for the application of the current law. Prime Minister Abe explained to hurry to prepare a bill that allows the Prime Minister to declare a “state of emergency” and enables local governments to decide to close schools etc. in case the infection of the new coronavirus spreads further.

March 5, 2020: [Pol] MHLW announced that it will apply public insurance for the inspection of the new coronavirus from the 6th March. This made it possible to carry out inspections without going through a health center, and MHLW plans to establish a system that enables efficient inspections, including those in the private sector.

March 5, 2020: A bio-venture company in Osaka started developing vaccines. At the earliest, six months later, they are planning to administer it to humans and conduct clinical trials to confirm its safety and efficacy.

March 6, 2020: The Ministry of Finance and the Financial Services Agency urged private and government-affiliated financial institutions to flexibly respond to changes in lending conditions, etc. for SMEs whose business and production had been affected. The Ministry and Agency also requested them to report whether they are responding appropriately.

March 7, 2020: [Pol] [Fin.sup] Prime Minister Abe intended to establish a system to provide substantially interest-free and unsecured loans to single-proprietors and SMEs whose business performance is temporarily deteriorating. The government is making final adjustments to expand the loan and guarantee limits to 1.6 trillion yen in total.

March 9, 2020: Based on the analysis by the cluster task force, it was also proposed, in the sixth meeting of the expert panel, that the basic strategy for preventing the spread of infection should have the three pillars: 1) early detection and early response to clusters, 2) early patient diagnosis, enhancement of intensive care for seriously ill patients, and securing a medical care provision system, and 3) behavioral change by citizens.

March 9, 2020: [Comm] The expert panel released its view on COVID-19 countermeasures on the same day, highlighting common factors for places where outbreaks had been confirmed so far as the simultaneous overlapping of the following three conditions, and requested people to avoid places and situations that meet the three conditions.

* Closed spaces with poor ventilation
* Crowded places with large numbers of people in proximity
* Close-range (within arm’s reach) conversation and speech

March 9, 2020: [Comm] At the government's expert meeting on the new coronavirus, Minister of MHLW, Mr. Kato announced that the current domestic situation had not progressed to explosive spread even compared to other countries.

March 10, 2020: [Pol] The government decided in a cabinet meeting to designate this situation of new coronavirus spread as a “historical emergency” for which the national and social records should be shared. A “historical emergency” is designated as a historically important policy matter when there is a risk of major and serious damage to the lives, bodies and property of the people, and attendees of related meetings. It is obligatory to prepare minutes such as agenda and remarks.
March 10, 2020: [Po] The government announced its second emergency response measures, whose budget scale was 430.8 billion yen (approx. 28.2 times as large as the first package) in total. Below is the overview:

(1) Improvement of infection spread prevention and medical care provision system (48.6 billion yen)
   - Measures to prevent the infection spread (10.7 billion yen)
   - Comprehensive mask supply and demand management (18.6 billion yen)
   - Strengthening the PCR testing system (1 billion yen)
   - Development of medical care provision system (13.3 billion yen)
   - Acceleration of therapeutic drug development, etc. (2.8 billion yen)

(2) Responding to issues that arise due to temporary school closures (246.3 billion yen)
   - Support for parents to take leave, etc. (subsidy: 155.6 billion yen; emergency small-lot funding for individuals in special cases: 20.7 billion yen)
   - Strengthening the system of after-school children's club systems, etc. (47 billion yen)
   - Correspondence to school lunch suspension (21.2 billion yen)
   - Promotion of telework, etc. (1.2 billion yen)

(3) Responding to reduction in business activities and employment (119.2 billion yen)
   - Expansion of special measures for employment adjustment subsidies (37.4 billion yen)
   - Measures for strong cash flow (78.2 billion yen)
   - Correspondence to the tourism industry (3.6 billion yen)

(4) Quick response emergency measures, etc. for situational changes (16.8 billion yen)
   - New legislation (Cabinet decision on March 10, 2020)
   - Strengthening international cooperation including contribution (15.5 billion yen) for emergency assistance by the WHO, etc. to countries hit by the outbreak

March 13, 2020: A medical center revealed a survey result that it took more than 9 days to become negative regarding more than half of the cruise ship passengers who had been infected without symptoms.

March 13, 2020: [Po] The bill to amend of adding “new coronavirus infection” to the “The Act on Special Measures for Pandemic Influenza and New Infectious Diseases Preparedness and Response (hereinafter, “the Special Measure Act”) was passed at the Diet, and it was promulgated on the following day. This amendment enables that the Prime Minister can make a declaration of “the state of emergency” and the prefectural governor will be able to request and give instructions such as refraining from going out and closing schools.

March 14, 2020: The amended “the Special Measure Act” was enforced. It was stipulated that the Prime Minister must meet both of the following two requirements when issuing a “state of emergency”:
  1) When there is a risk of serious damage to the lives and health of the people
  2) When there is a risk that the nationwide and rapid spread will have a significant impact on people's lives and the economy.

March 17, 2020: Minister of MHLW, Kato, announced that 2.5 million masks owned by each ministry and agency will be distributed to medical institutions by the 18th.

March 17, 2020: In European countries, the situation of the new coronavirus infection was deemed to have spread considerably by this time. Having considered it, the Expert Meeting on the Novel Coronavirus Disease Control requested the government to introduce strong border measures against Europe like that it had been taken against China and South Korea.
March 17, 2020: Minister of MHLW, Mr. Kato showed the idea to encourage medical institutions to conduct a drive-through method of testing if sufficient consideration is given to preventing infection. There had already been some cases of the drive-through testing method implemented in local regions by this day.

March 18, 2020: [Comm] A Twitter account of the government posted a message to avoid the 3 Cs (closed, crowded, close-range) when you go out. The 3 Cs started to be used very often in various media from around this time.

March 18, 2020: [Pol] [Fin.sup] Applications for a new subsidy program began to cover the income of parents who had to take leave or reduce their business due to temporary school closure. If a company provides paid leave in addition to annual paid leave, it will be subsidized up to a daily amount of 8,330 yen. Also, additional emergency measures “to deal with livelihood insecurity” were decided, and the following measures were implemented.
  ▪ an expansion in special case emergency small-lot funding for individuals (with a ceiling of 200,000 yen to respond to livelihood insecurity for households such as individual proprietors who need loans for the urgent and temporary support of their livelihoods due to income loss caused by the suspension of their business, regardless of whether or not schools were closed),
  ▪ deferment of utility bill payments,
  ▪ deferment of national tax and social insurance premium payments, and
  ▪ deferment of local tax collection.

March 19, 2020: [Comm] MHLW announced that a total of 21.5 million cloth masks (washable and usable repeatedly) will be distributed sequentially from the end of this month as a response to the shortage in nursing care facilities.

March 20, 2020: [Comm] Regarding the distribution of cloth masks that can be washed and used repeatedly to nursing care facilities, the government released a video that introduces how to wash cloth masks so that they can continue to be used hygienically.

March 21, 2020: [Pol] The government started a 14-day waiting request for travelers from European countries (Schengen Agreement member countries) after 21 March.

March 23, 2020: Governor of Tokyo Metropolitan government, Ms. Koike, mentioned that they must avoid taking strong measures such as blockade of the city, so-called lockdown. She showed a concern that they may have to take strong measures depending on future situations and called for public cooperation.

March 23, 2020: [Pol] MEXT notified the Board of Education and other organizations nationwide of the guidelines for resuming schools from the new semester. The guidelines stipulate that children/students identified as infected or close contacts will be suspended from attendance.

March 24, 2020: Prime Minister Abe and IOC President Bach agreed to postpone the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics for about a year. Eventually, the Olympics dates were set on July 23, 2021 for 17 days, and the Paralympics to start on August 24, 2021 for 13 days.

March 26, 2020: [Pol] The government set up a “Government Response Headquarters.” This allowed the Prime Minister to make a “state of emergency” in the event of a nationwide and rapid spread that could have a profound effect on people’s lives and the economy. However, it was explained that the government is not in a situation to make a “state of emergency” at this moment.
March 26, 2020: Following the worldwide spread of the new coronavirus, the government issued “Level 2” “risk information” to the entire world and requested people to stop unnecessary and unurgent travel abroad. This is the first time that the government requested people to refrain from traveling to the whole world regardless of country or region.

March 28, 2020: Prime Minister Abe mentioned that the government could not enforce the lockdown with penalties, and acknowledged that the prefectural governor would make requests and instructions as necessary.

March 28, 2020: Infected people in Japan: more than 200 people per day, the highest number ever

March 28, 2020: The Ministry of Defense ordered the Self-Defense Forces to dispatch disasters in order to strengthen border measures following the spread of the new coronavirus. They will support quarantine at airports and transportation to accommodation facilities by “voluntary dispatch” without requests from prefectures.

March 28, 2020: The government decided on a “Basic Response Policy” that included general policies. Prime Minister Abe instructed the formulation of emergency economic measures that will exceed the scale of the Lehman shock and the formulation of a supplementary budget for the new fiscal year.

March 29, 2020: The government announced that it will set up a benefit system for the first time to support SMEs, and will also allow private financial institutions to receive interest-free loans. The new benefits system is an exceptional measure of directly providing cash to SMEs and small businesses.

April 1, 2020: The refusal of foreigners to enter the country had been expanded to 73 countries and regions at this time, including the United States, almost all of Europe, Indonesia and Thailand, and all of China and South Korea, which were previously part of the region.

April 1, 2020: Prime Minister Abe announced a policy to distribute two cloth masks per address to all households nationwide. “Since cloth masks can be reused by washing them with detergent, they are extremely effective in meeting the rapidly expanding demand for masks,” the Prime Minister said. MHLW calculated that the total estimated cost of securing masks and mailing is 46.6 billion yen.

April 1, 2020: MHLW compiled and opened the measures against new coronavirus infectious diseases for pregnant women, etc. MHLW requested consideration for pregnant female workers, etc. to economic organizations (Japan Business Federation, Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, National Federation of Small Business Associations, National Federation of Small Business Associations) and labour organizations (Japan Labour Union General Federation).

April 2, 2020: Concerning a case of natural disaster, the national government notified prefectural governments and others to strengthen measures such as using accommodation facilities such as hotels as evacuation shelters in order to avoid further spread of new coronavirus infections at shelters.

April 3, 2020: A strategy of “two-week waiting/isolating request to immigrants from all over the world” as an additional border measure was enforced. The government requests immigrants from all countries and regions, including the Japanese, to wait/isolate themselves at home or hotels for two weeks. It also asks not to use public transportation to get there.
April 6, 2020: [Comm] Chief Cabinet Secretary, Suga said, “We will make a comprehensive decision in line with the basic coping policy, considering the opinions of experts,” in view of the fact that the issuance of an “emergency declaration” is being considered. Also, he was then asked if the “state of emergency” was confused with lockdown = blockade of the city, while Mr Suga said, “In Japan's legal system, it is as enforceable as Western lockdown. There is no mechanism to block the city with this, and Europe, the United States and Japan are clearly different.”

The 1st Wave (April 2020- late May 2020) ➔

April 7, 2020: [Pol] The outline of the first supplementary budget (post-April 20th alteration) was approved by the Cabinet totaling 25.5655 trillion yen as shown below.

(1) Improvement of infection spread prevention measures and medical care provision system, and development of therapeutic drugs (1.8097 trillion yen)
   ▪ Securing Avigan (13.9 billion yen)
   ▪ Research and development of therapeutic agents, vaccines, etc. (51.6 billion yen)
   ▪ Temporary regional revitalization grants for COVID-19 response (100 billion yen)

(2) Maintaining employment and business continuation (19.4905 trillion yen)
   ▪ Expanding special measures for employment adjustment subsidy (69 billion yen)
   ▪ New benefits for SMEs (2.3176 trillion yen)
   ▪ New benefits for all people nationwide (128.0803 trillion yen)

(3) Recovery of economic activity by public and private sectors as a next step (1.8482 trillion yen)
   ▪ “Go-To” campaign project (1.6794 trillion yen)

(4) Building a robust economic structure (917.2 billion yen)
   ▪ Subsidy for promoting domestic investment in supply chain measures (220 billion yen)
   ▪ Promoting digital infrastructure for early execution of public investment (17.8 billion yen)
   ▪ Project for supporting digitization by SMEs (10 billion yen)

(5) Reserve funds for COVID-19 countermeasures (1.5 trillion yen)

In order to maintain employment and keep business viable, the employment adjustment subsidies were further expanded to cover so-called non-regular workers. When employers maintained employment without dismissing, a subsidy of nine-tenths of the furlough leave allowance was paid to employees was provided.

The government did not plan to draft a second extra budget at the time of the first supplementary budget formulation. However, due to the spread of the infection, the government decided to extend the state of emergency, and calls for more additional economic measures grew. With this background, the government began to recognize the need to consider further countermeasures by the time the first supplementary budget was approved by the Diet at the end of April.

April 7, 2020: [Comm] The government issued the state of emergency based on the New Coronavirus Countermeasures Act. The target prefectures were 7 prefectures (Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama, Chiba, Osaka, Hyogo, and Fukuoka). The declaration is valid until May 6.
Prime Minister Abe said, “According to experts’ estimates if we can reduce the chances of contact between people by at least 70% and as much as 80%, we can reduce the number of infected people in two weeks,” and requested people to refrain from going out.

April 8, 2020: [Epi] Infected people in Japan More than 500 people per day, the highest number ever.

4 The ratio was four-fifths prior to this expansion.
Over 5,000 infected people in Japan (excluding cruise ships). Over 100 deaths in Japan (excluding cruise ships).

April 10, 2020: [Comm] Tokyo Metropolitan Governor Koike announced six business formats and facilities that the Government requests to be closed. Specifically, 1) entertainment facilities, 2) universities and cram schools, 3) facilities for exercise and play, 4) theatres, 5) facilities for gatherings and exhibitions, 6) commercial facilities. In addition, restaurants and bars were requested to be open from 5 am to 8 pm, and alcoholic beverages were requested to be served by 7 pm. It also revealed that it will pay cooperation money to SMEs that fully respond to the requests. [Epi] Infected people in Japan: More than 600 people per day, the highest number ever.

April 11, 2020 [Epi] Infected people in Japan: More than 700 people per day, the highest number ever. [Comm] Prime Minister Abe instructed companies in 7 prefectures to request “70% reduction in commuting” He also called for refraining from using restaurants and bars that accompany customer service in downtown areas at night.

April 11, 2020: [Comm] MHLW called for cooperation in refraining from going out by appointing a Japanese mythical spirit “Amabie“, which has become a hot topic on the Internet as an educational character on SNS, as an enlightenment character for SNS. There is a legend that the plague will subside if you show the picture of “Amabie” to people, and SNS has posted a series of pictures of “Amabie” in hopes of the end of the spread of infection. MHLW began disseminating information using the “Amabie” on Twitter’s official account in order to attract young people's interest.

April 13, 2020: [Digital] The national government announced that they are considering the development and introduction of an app for close-contacts

April 16, 2020: [Comm] The state of emergency was expanded nationwide. [Digital] The government’s Anti-COVID-19 Tech Team was set up (headed by Yasutoshi Nishimura, the Minister in charge of combating the novel coronavirus disease)

April 17, 2020: [Pol] [Fin.sup] Prime Minister Abe announced the plan of the Special Cash Handout to provide 100,000 yen per person to individual citizens instead of select families as economic assistance amid the COVID-19 crisis. It was allocated 12.734 trillion yen for the program and 145.8 billion yen for its administration in the first supplementary budget (Cabinet decision on April 7).

April 18, 2020: [Epi] Over 10,000 infected people in Japan (excluding cruise ships).

April 23, 2020: [Epi] Over 300 deaths in Japan (excluding cruise ships).

April 24, 2020: As a result of a survey by the MEXT to local governments nationwide, as of April 22, 93% of public schools had been closed. The breakdown is kindergarten 73%, elementary school 95%, junior high school 95%, high school 97%.

As of April 10, the percentage of school closures was 64% nationwide, however, the number of schools closed increased due to the expansion of the state of emergency nationwide.

April 25, 2020: The state of emergency was removed in all prefectures

April 25, 2020: [Pol] Around the end of April, restaurants and bars were allowed to open until 20:00 without serving alcohol.

April 26, 2020: [Pol] MHLW notified all the local prefectural governments to report the number of “severely ill” patients and required prefectures to report as “severely ill” if any one of the following three conditions is met among inpatients.
(1) Needs management in the intensive care unit (ICU), etc.
(2) Ventilator management is required
(3) Management by extracorporeal cardiopulmonary support (ECMO) is required

May 1, 2020: A new Subsidy Program for Sustaining Businesses (jizokuka kyufukin) was established for the purpose of supporting the business continuation of individual proprietors including freelancers and SMEs affected by COVID-19, and providing a source for recovery. Under certain conditions, benefits equal to the reduction of revenue from the previous year were provided with a maximum of up to 2 million yen for SMEs and 1 million yen for individual proprietors.

May 1, 2020: Gathering Medical Information System (G-MIS) was launched the full operation. Hurriedly put into trial of G-MIS operation at the end of March 2020 as a countermeasure against the new coronavirus. It was developed based on Cybozu’s cloud-based platform “kintone.”

May 2, 2020: [Epi] Over 500 deaths in Japan (excluding cruise ships).

May 3, 2020: [Epi] Over 15,000 infected people in Japan (excluding cruise ships).

May 4, 2020: [Comm] The government officially decided to extend the state of emergency nationwide until May 31. Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to have experts analyze the trend of the number of infected people by May 14, and he will remove the declaration before the 31st if the government judges it possible.

May 4, 2020: [Comm] The expert meeting provided a concrete example of a “new lifestyle” to prevent the spread of infection in the long term in areas where the number of new infections is not large as follows: 1) Ensuring physical distance, 2) Wearing a mask, and 3) Thoroughly wash your hands. Furthermore, Keep a distance of 2m (minimum 1m) from people as much as possible, Choose outdoors rather than indoors, When talking, avoid the front as much as possible, Other examples in life situations such as shopping and meals and work styles.

May 8, 2020: [Comm] The government reviewed the guideline on “reception/consultation”, and the notation that “fever of 37.5 degrees or higher continues 4 days or longer” was removed. There were voices from experts saying that it was regarded as a necessary condition and could lead to restraint of consultation. MHLW called on people to consult immediately if they have symptoms such as suffocation, strong dullness, or high fever.

May 10, 2020: [Pol] [Epi] [Manual] [Qua] A trial of a new system, the Health Center Real-time Information-sharing System on COVID-19 (HER-SYS*), was commenced to operate by some local governments / public health centers.
*HER-SYS is a system where information on COVID-19 infected patients (e.g., symptoms and travel history) can be input digitally, controlled centrally, and shared among the relevant personnel. HER-SYS aims to realize the once-only principle for on-site work by local public health center personnel. There is no need to enter the NESID (Infectious Disease Surveillance System operated by NIID) in each municipality by using HER-SYS.

May 13, 2020: [Epi] [Qua] “Detection of pathogen antigen by rapid diagnostic kit” was added to the test method in Notification Standards of “the 7th designated infectious disease (coronavirus infection (the pathogen is a beta coronavirus genus coronavirus (limited to the virus reported by the PR of China to the WHO in January 2020))” and “nasopharyngeal swab” was added to the test material.

May 14, 2020: [Pol] Prime Minister Abe instructed Finance Minister, Aso, to formulate a second extra budget. Prior to this, on May 12, the government and ruling coalition party had reached a
decision to formulate a second supplementary budget to get it approved at the 201st regular session of the Diet.

May 14, 2020: [Comm] The government decided to remove the state of emergency in 39 prefectures, saying that it is no longer necessary to take emergency measures when the infection situation, medical care provision system, and monitoring system are comprehensively considered. Even in the 39 prefectures that were lifted, Prime Minister Abe said that, if relaxed much, the infection would spread at once, and he called for reducing contact with people and refraining from moving across prefectures as much as possible during at least May.

Eight prefectures of Hokkaido, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, Saitama, Osaka, Hyogo, and Kyoto continued to be subject to the emergency declaration. Prime Minister Abe urged these eight prefectures to continue to refrain from going out. He asked experts again about the situation within a week and, if possible, remove the declaration without waiting for the deadline at the end of May.

May 21, 2020: [Comm] Of the eight prefectures where the state of emergency continues, the government will lift the 3 prefectures in Kansai region (Osaka, Kyoto, and Hyogo), while the government officially decided to continue the state of emergency in Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa metropolitan areas, and Hokkaido. Prime Minister Abe indicated that the state of emergency could be removed in areas where the declaration will continue if the number of infected people continues to decline. He reiterated the opinions of experts on May 25 to decide.

May 22, 2020: [Pol] The Subsidy Program for Sustaining Businesses was expanded to include new start-ups and freelancers. Individual proprietors can receive the subsidy even if they are eligible for Special Cash Handouts (100,000 yen for every citizen).

May 22, 2020 [Manual] MHLW notified the local governments on the introduction of “Health Center Real-time Information-sharing System on COVID-19 (HER-SYS)”.


May 25, 2020 [Comm] The government decided to remove the state of emergency in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, Saitama prefectures and Hokkaido. The state of emergency issued on April 7 was removed nationwide for the first time in about a month and a half. Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to gradually ease the refraining from going out, refraining from events, and restricting the use of facilities, while assessing the infection situation and the risk of spreading the infection in the area approximately every three weeks. He called on people to continue to avoid “3 Cs”, secure distances between people, and continue basic infection control measures such as wearing masks, as well as the medical care provision system and inspection system, and expressed his intention to continue to strengthen the medical care provision system and examination system.

May 27, 2020: [Pol] [Fin.sup] The Cabinet reached the decision on a second supplementary budget totaling 31.9114 trillion yen. Below is the overview.

(1) Expansion of employment adjustment subsidy (415.9 billion yen)

(2) Strengthening measures for financing support (11,639 trillion yen)
   ▪ Loans for SMEs (8.8174 trillion yen)
   ▪ Loans for medium-sized and large companies (452.1 billion yen)
   ▪ Utilization of capital funds (2.3692 trillion yen)

(3) Creation of rent support benefits (2.0242 trillion yen)

(4) Strengthening medical care provision system etc. (2.9892 trillion yen)
- Emergency comprehensive support grant for COVID-19 (2.237 trillion yen)
- Distribution of surgical masks to medical institutions (437.9 billion yen)
- Development of vaccines and therapeutic drugs (205.5 billion yen) etc.

(5) Other support (4.7127 trillion yen)
- Expanding temporary regional revitalization grants (200 billion yen)
- Additional benefits for low-income single-parent households (136.5 billion yen)
- Strengthening the Subsidy Program for Sustaining Businesses (1.94 trillion yen)
- Others (636.3 billion yen)

(6) Reserve funds for COVID-19 countermeasures (10 trillion yen)

May 29, 2020: [Pol] [Epi] [Manual] [Qui] HER-SYS started to be operated by the prefectures, local public health centers, and medical institutions.

⇒⇒⇒ The 1st Wave (April 2020 - late May 2020)

June 1, 2020: [Pol] The Tokyo Metropolitan Government published the four steps (step 0 to step 4) of requesting business closure depending on the infection situation. The Tokyo government will consider gradual mitigation by evaluating the situation on a two-week basis to implement. If the infection situation has deteriorated again, they will issue a “Tokyo Alert” to call for caution.

June 2, 2020: [Comm] The Tokyo Metropolitan Government issued the first “Tokyo Alert”, saying that there are signs that the infection situation is worsening (i.e., 34 new infection cases were confirmed on this day in Tokyo).

June 12, 2020: [Pol] [Fin.sup] The second supplementary budget was approved by the Diet as proposed by the government (see May 27, 2020). The total additional expenditure for the general account was 31.9114 trillion yen, the highest supplementary budget ever, and the project scale was 117.1 trillion. All of the financial resources for the second supplementary budget were covered by issuing government bonds.

June 14, 2020: [Pol] [Fin.sup] The second supplementary budget totaling 31.8171 trillion yen was successfully approved at the Diet as proposed (see May 27, 2020 for the details).

[Fin.sup] It expanded the employment adjustment subsidy (the daily upper limit of 8,330 yen raised to 15,000 yen), and the applicable period was extended from the end of June 2020 to the end of September 2020. A new benefit that employees could apply for without going through their employer was also created.

[Fin.sup] Regarding business continuity, substantially interest-free and unsecured loans were significantly expanded, and rent support benefits were created to subsidize business rents.

[Fin.sup] In addition, for small-scale businesses, a new subsidy for sustaining small-scale businesses (COVID-19 special response type) was established. The eligibilities were small-scale businesses that had taken the following countermeasures: dealing with supply chain damages; improving the telework environment; repairing ventilation equipment for COVID-19 countermeasures; disinfecting and cleaning; and taking measures to prevent droplet infection. This subsidy was up to 1 million yen. This subsidy aimed to promote the creation and maintenance of businesses that were desirable for future economic development by subsidizing businesses suitable for a society of living “with coronavirus.”

[Fin.sup] In relation to cash flow support, the extra budget featured the crisis response loan scheme, as well as an extension of the deadline for the capital participation scheme for private financial institutions based on the Act on Special Measures for Strengthening Financial Functions.

June 18, 2020: [Pol] [Fin.sup] The measure of the expansion of the employment adjustment subsidy (nine-tenth) was further expanded so that SMEs could receive a subsidy of up to 100%.
June 19, 2020: [Digital] The smartphone app “COVID-19 Contact-Confirming Application (COCOA)” was launched and available to download. MHLW website says

June 19, 2020: The government relaxed the people’s movements across prefectures as new infections had decreased nationwide. Also, the closure request to restaurant industries that accompanies entertainment was abolished on the premise to follow the guidelines for infection control. Furthermore, it became possible to hold events with a certain number of people and capacity, e.g., professional baseball games began with no spectators.

June 25, 2020: [Pol] [Epi] [Qra] “Detection of pathogen antigen by antigen quantitative test” was added to the test method in Notification Standards of “the 7th designated infectious disease (coronavirus infection (the pathogen is a beta coronavirus genus coronavirus (limited to the virus reported by the PR of China to the WHO in January 2020))” and “nasopharyngeal swab or saliva” was added to the test material.

June 30, 2020: [Digital] The COCOA app revised version for iOS was released.

July 1, 2020: [Digital] The COCOA app revised version for Android OS was released.

July 2, 2020: [Digital] MHLW announced that COCOA’s function to provide notifications of the close contacts with people who are positive for the new coronavirus started on July 3, i.e., the processing code starts to be issued from the following day.

If the person using the app becomes a positive person for the new coronavirus infection and the person agrees to register the positive on the registration screen of the app, the possibility of contacts in the past 14 days can be notified. Registration by this positive person with the application is a mechanism that you have to enter the processing code issued to the positive person himself/herself from the information grasping/management support system (HER-SYS).

If the app had been installed between June 19 and July 2 and the user agreed to use it and turned on Bluetooth, after the date, the record of the possibility of contact is kept only in the terminal up to 14 days before. This record allows users to be notified of possible contacts.

July 9, 2020: [Epi] A total of 355 infections was announced. The number of infected people per day has exceeded 300 since May 2.

July 10, 2020: [Epi] A total of 430 infections was announced. The number of infected people per day has exceeded 400 since April 24.

July 13, 2020: [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS version 1.1.2).

July 16, 2020: [Epi] A total of 624 infections was announced. The number of infected people per day has exceeded 600 since April 10.

July 17, 2020: [Pol] This fiscal year’s “Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2020” was presented at the government's Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy.

Regarding the support for maintaining employment under the COVID-19 situation, it is stated that the government distributes the employment adjustment subsidies to business owners by simplifying the application on an online-based process as well as implementing the leave
support fund and allowance directly to employees of SMEs depending on the person’s pre-furlough wages and the length of the furlough.

**July 22, 2020:** [Epi] A total of 795 infections was announced. Recorded the highest number of infected people per day.

**July 22, 2020:** [Po] “Go-To Travel” campaign started. “Go-To Travel” is a measure to stimulate tourism demand by discounting the cost of accommodation, domestic travel packages in half. The savings come in form of 1) a 35% discount on the total cost and 2) coupons worth 15% of the total cost to be spent on other travel expenses during the trip at tourist facilities and souvenir shops.

The maximum discount that can be received for overnight trips is 13,000 yen per person and night, while the maximum amount of coupons that can be received is 7,000 yen per person and night. In other words, the upper limit applies to travel plans that cost more than 40,000 yen per person and night. In the case of day trips, travelers can receive a discount of up to 7,000 yen and coupons of up to 3,000 yen per trip.

The campaign is available for all residents of Japan, including foreign residents (not for visitors). The discounts apply to overnight stays at registered lodgings or travel plans purchased through registered travel agents.

Due to the increase in infected people, travel to Tokyo and travel of people living in Tokyo were excluded from the discount. Even so, there were concerns about the spread of the infection because of implementing the campaign. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga stated, “It is the government’s basic policy to balance infection control with the gradual resumption of socio-economic activities. This “Go-To Campaign” is part of such a gradual resumption of the economy.”

**July 22, 2020:** [Comm] The Chairman of the Japan Medical Association, Toshio Nakagawa, mentioned at a press conference “If the number of infected people increases more markedly, there is a high probability that the medical care provision system, including regular medical care, will collapse.” He also said, “We are getting into four consecutive holidays from tomorrow, and they will be “four consecutive holidays of patience.” I would like the people to keep avoiding travelling across prefectural borders and going out for anything non-urgent or unnecessary.”

**The 2nd Wave (late July 2020 – August 2020)**

**July 23, 2020:** [Epi] A total of 981 infections was announced. Recorded the highest number of infected people per day.

**July 26, 2020:** [Epi] Over 30,000 infected people in Japan (excluding cruise ships) in total.

**July 28, 2020:** [Epi] Over 1,000 death in Japan (excluding cruise ships).

**August 7, 2020:** [Comm] The Coronavirus Infectious Diseases Control Subcommittee made recommendations to the government on indicators and guidelines (Stage I to IV) for implementing measures in response to future changes in the infection situation. Each stage was defined as follows:

**Stage I:** Sporadic outbreaks of infected people and stages where there is no particular hindrance to the medical care provision system

**Stage II:** The stage where the number of infected people gradually increases and the burden on the medical care provision system accumulates
Stage III: Stages that require action to avoid a rapid increase in infected people and major obstacles to the medical care provision system

Stage IV: Stages that require action to avoid the explosive spread of infection and malfunction of declared medical care delivery system

Mid-August 2020: [Epi] It was found that the number of “severely ill” patients varies depending on the criteria by MHLW and by each municipality. On April 26, MHLW notified all the local prefectural governments to report the number of “severely ill” if any one of the following three conditions is met among inpatients: (1) Needs management in the ICU, etc., (2) Ventilator management is required, and (3) Management by ECMO is required. However, as the availability of beds were limited, non-severely ill patients were also in the ICU, hence not all the patients in the ICU were seriously ill.

- MHLW: “severely ill” = all patients in the ICU
- Tokyo and some other municipalities: “severely ill” = Patients who are in the ICU and need treatment with a ventilator or ECMO (patients in the ICU without such treatments were not counted)

August 20, 2020: Shigeru Omi, Chairman of the Coronavirus Countermeasures Subcommittee, said, “We need to be careful about future trends, but it seems that we have reached a peak nationwide” in his lecture at the Japanese Society of Infectious Diseases.

August 24, 2020: [Pol] The government decided to continue the limit of 5,000 people to attend an event until the end of September with the approval of the government subcommittee. The limit was originally set valid until the end of August, and it was extended 1 month.

August 28, 2020: [Pol] Aiming to secure the number of vaccines that can be provided to all citizens by the first half of next year, the government decided on a new policy for dealing with the new coronavirus to secure a medical care provision system and drastic expansion of the testing system to 200,000 cases a day.

The 2nd Wave (late July 2020 - August 2020)

September 8, 2020: [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS version 1.1.3).

September 9, 2020: [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (Android version 1.1.3).

September 2, 2020: A large-scale study began to collect blood from people who had recovered from a new coronavirus infection and find out how long the “antibodies” last in the body. For people over 20 years old who were infected from April to May. Blood is drawn six months and one year after infection to find out how much antibody remains. The study aims to use it for risk analysis of reinfection and research and development of vaccines that produce antibodies in the body.

September 5, 2020: [Pol] The government decided to spend about 700 billion yen from this year’s reserve fund in order to cover the cost of purchasing a new coronavirus vaccine from overseas pharmaceutical companies. Regarding the vaccine for the new coronavirus, the government had reached a basic agreement with pharmaceutical companies in the United States and the United Kingdom to receive supply if the development is successful and also negotiates with another American company to receive a supply. The government is planning to start vaccination from the first half of next year.
**September 16, 2020:** The Abe Cabinet resignations and a new Cabinet with Prime Minister Suga were inaugurated.

**September 23, 2020:** [Digital] MHLW gave a short introduction of the COCOA app in English on their website.

**September 24, 2020:** [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS version 1.1.4).

**September 28, 2020:** [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (Android version 1.1.4).

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**October 1, 2020:** [Pol] The “Go-To Eat” is a campaign to stimulate the demand of restaurants working on infection prevention measures by supporting the issuance of points and meal tickets with premiums to boost consumer spending and help the economy recover from losses caused by the pandemic, and at the same time supporting agriculture, forestry, and fisheries that supply ingredients.

October 2, 2020: [Epi] “Nasal cavity wipe” was added to the test materials of “Detection of pathogen antigen by antigen qualitative test” and “Detection of pathogen antigen by antigen quantitative test.”

**October 3, 2020:** [Qua] Following the relaxation of immigration restrictions for the entire world, Minister of MHLW, Tamura, visited the quarantine station at Haneda Airport and showed the idea that the government is expanding the inspection system to 20,000 cases per day, doubling the current status, including local airports.

**October 8, 2020:** [Qua] The government started to operate a new system that allows travellers for business purposes to make reservations for PCR tests online. This is a response to anticipation that the restricted traffic to and from overseas will be gradually eased due to the influence of the new coronavirus.

**October 9, 2020:** [Fin.sup] MHLW began accepting applications online regarding the “leave of absence support (kyugyo shien kin)” system that supports people who have been forced to take leave due to the influence of the new coronavirus but are not paid the leave allowance by the company. 80% of wages will be paid directly up to 11,000 yen a day.

**October 14, 2020:** With “Go To Travel,” a tourism-stimulating measure, the government decided to allocate an additional budget to help all travelers maintain a 35% discount on their prices. As a result, all businesses that have reduced the discount rate are expected to return the discount rate to 35%.

**October 14, 2020:** [Pol] Notification Standards by Physician is amended as follows:

**BEFORE:** “The doctor must immediately make a notification pursuant to the provisions of Article 12, Clause 1, Article 12 of the Infectious Diseases Control Law if the doctor diagnoses the person as a pseudo-symptom of a new coronavirus infection.”

**AFTER (applied from this day):** “The doctor must immediately make a notification pursuant to the provisions of Clause 1, Article 12 of the Infectious Diseases Control Law only when the person is diagnosed with a pseudo-symptom of a new coronavirus infection and is deemed to require hospitalization.”

**October 24, 2020:** [Fin.sup] Regarding the “leave support fund (kyugyo shienkin)” that supports people who are forced to take a leave of absence due to the influence of the new coronavirus but are not paid the leave allowance, there had been a number of cases where people who work in non-regular employment hesitate to apply without the cooperation of companies.
MHLW plans to summarize specific cases in which support payments are permitted, and to inform them at the earliest this month, given that the background is that the understanding of the corporate system is not advanced.

**November 5, 2020:** [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS and Android version 1.1.5).

**November 5, 2020:** MHLW reported that a total of 103 clusters a week were confirmed nationwide, and it increased about 1.6 times than the previous week. The most infection was confirmed at “companies and government offices” with 29 cases, followed by “Restaurants” with 20 cases, “Welfare facilities” such as facilities for the elderly with 18 cases, “schools / educational facilities” with 11 cases, and 9 cases at “medical institutions.” The total number of clusters confirmed in the one month until November 2 was 341, which is close to 20% of the total number of clusters confirmed so far.

**November 10, 2020:** The government’s subcommittee made an urgent suggestion, as social and economic activities are gradually returning, that there is a possibility of a rapid spread of infection if appropriate measures are not taken.”

Omi, Chairman of the coronavirus subcommittee, showed five measures required of the general public, local governments, and the national government so that they can balance social and economic activities with infection control even in winter. 1) Expanded cluster countermeasure” 2) Dissemination of information with dialogue, 3) Reliable implementation of infection control measures at stores and workplaces, 4) Strengthening efforts to resume international traffic, 5) Promotion of gene analysis for infection control verification.

**November 12, 2020:** [Epi] A total of 1,661 infections was announced. Recorded the highest number of infected people per day.

**November 16, 2020:** Prime Minister Suga, regarding “Go-To Eat,” requested the prefectural governors to consider excluding meal tickets and points for eating and drinking with a certain number of people, such as 5 or more, in areas where the infection is spreading.

**November 17, 2020:** [Digital] The number of downloads of the COCOA app reached 20 million.

**November 18, 2020:** [Epi] A total of 2,201 infections a day was announced. Recorded the highest number of infected people per day.

**November 18, 2020:** Mr Nakagawa, Chairman of the Japan Medical Association, commented on the relationship between the “Go-To Travel” campaign and infection status as they are definitely well related considering the course and the timing of the increase in the number of infected people though the evidence is not clear.

**November 19, 2020:** [Epi] The number of infected people nationwide on the 19th was 2,388, which was the highest number ever. In addition, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government announced on the 19th that it had confirmed that 534 new infected with the new coronavirus in Tokyo. It is the first time in Tokyo that more than 500 people were confirmed infected a day.

**November 24, 2020:** Osaka Prefecture decided to request a reduction in business hours for 15 days from November 27, targeting restaurants in the downtown area of Osaka City. The requested business hours were “until 9 pm” for targeted restaurants that serve alcoholic beverages and entertain in the downtown.

The number of infected people in Osaka prefecture was 490 on November 22 a day, and the number of severely ill patients was 103 as of November 24, which both were the highest ever in the prefecture.
The usage rate of beds exclusively for critically ill patients was 50.0%, an increase of 16.5 points in a week, and the medical system was very tight.

**November 27, 2020:** Omi, Chairman of the government subcommittee, told the House of Representatives Health and Labour Committee that “it is difficult to calm the current spread of infection with individual efforts alone. The core of the problem is general medical care. We are in a situation where it is difficult to achieve a balance, and we recognize that the stage of relying solely on individual efforts has passed.”

**December 1, 2020:** Municipal Hospital in Osaka City decided to temporarily close some specialized wards that handle cancer patients in order to secure nurses for patients with the new corona. Due to the shortage of nurses, there are other hospitals in Osaka that had been forced to close their wards. There were some cases reported similar cases of infection affecting the treatment for general patients in other areas in Japan.

**December 2, 2020:** [Digital] MHLW notified the revision to the privacy policy of the COCOA app on their website.

**December 3, 2020:** [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS and Android version 1.2.0).

**December 8, 2020:** The Ministry of Defence decided to dispatch 10 nurses and others to Asahikawa City, Hokkaido Prefecture. The period is within 2 weeks. The Ministry also coordinated the dispatch of nurses to Osaka Prefecture. The medical system in both prefectures is tight due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection.

**December 12, 2020:** In the four-stage coronavirus infection status indicated by the government subcommittee (released on August 7th), when the “maximum secured bed usage rate” exceeded 50%, it corresponds to the most serious Stage IV, and medical treatment was due to the explosive spread of infection. It said that there is a risk that the provisioning system will malfunction. By this day, five prefectures (Hokkaido, Tokyo, Osaka, Hyogo, and Kochi) had reached the level of Stage IV.

**December 14, 2020:** “Go to Travel” temporarily suspended due to the increasing number of the infected.

Based on the recommendations of the subcommittee, the government decided to suspend the operation nationwide from November 28th to January 11th next year.

There was an increasing criticizing from opposition parties saying, “It is clear that Prime Minister Suga was particular about spreading the infection nationwide, and it can be said that it is a man-made disaster. The responsibility is extremely large.” Even within the ruling party, there had been harsh views saying that it cannot deny that the impression that the response is behind.” Until November 27, the government not only excluded trips to major cities with tight medical situation such as Sapporo, Osaka, Tokyo, and Nagoya but also called for refraining from traveling from those cities.

**December 15, 2020:** [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS and Android version 1.2.1).

**December 15, 2020:** [Pol] The third supplementary budget was decided by the Cabinet totaling 25.5655 trillion yen as shown below.

I. Measures to prevent the spread of new coronavirus infections (4.3581 trillion yen)
   1. Securing a medical care provision system and supporting medical institutions, etc. (1.6447 trillion yen)
▪ New Coronavirus Infectious Disease Emergency Comprehensive Support Grant (Securing beds and accommodation facilities) (1.3011 trillion yen)
▪ Support for prevention of the spread of infection in medical institutions for medical examinations and tests (107.1 billion yen)
▪ Financial support for medical institutions (1103.7 billion yen)
▪ Support by medical fees for medical institutions such as pediatrics (7.1 billion yen)

(2) Enhancement of inspection system, improvement of vaccination system, etc. (820.4 billion yen)
▪ Development and implementation of intake system for new coronavirus vaccine (573.6 billion yen)
▪ Implementation of PCR test, antigen test, etc. (67.2 billion yen)

(3) Thorough infection control work based on clinical trials (1.7487 trillion yen)
▪ Temporary grant for regional revitalization from new coronavirus infectious diseases (1.5 trillion yen)
▪ Infectious disease control business due to postponement of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games (95.9 billion yen)

(4) International cooperation for the convergence of infectious diseases (1,444 billion yen)
▪ Support to Africa, the Middle East, Asia / Oceania through international organizations

II. Transformation of economic structure and realization of a virtuous cycle toward post-corona (11.6766 trillion yen)
(1) 1. Digital reform and realization of a green society (2.8256 trillion yen)
▪ Support for digital infrastructure reform of local organizations (178.8 billion yen)
▪ Promotion of spread of my number card (133.6 billion yen)
▪ Post 5G / Beyond 5G (6G) R & D support (140 billion yen)
▪ Creation of a fund to support innovative technological development for carbon neutral (2 trillion yen)
▪ Establishment of green housing point system (109.4 billion yen)

(2) 2. Productivity improvement through the transformation of economic structure and innovation (2.3959 trillion yen)
▪ Management conversion support for SMEs (business restructuring subsidy) (1.1485 trillion yen)
▪ University fund (500 billion yen)
▪ Sustaining Businesses subsidies, etc. (230 billion yen)
▪ Support for strengthening supply chains in Japan and overseas (222.5 billion yen)
▪ Priority support for maintaining and revitalizing local public transportation (15 billion yen)

(3) 3. Realization of a virtuous cycle of manual private demand in the community, society and employment (6.4551 trillion yen)
▪ Financing support for SMEs and small-scale businesses (3.2049 trillion yen)
▪ Go-To Travel (1.0311 trillion yen)
▪ Go-To Eat (51.5 billion yen)
▪ Special measures for employment adjustment subsidies (543 billion yen)
▪ Special measures such as emergency small-lot funds (419.9 billion yen)
▪ Tourism (improvement of infrastructure for inbound revival) (65 billion yen)
▪ Expansion of subsidy measures for infertility treatment (37 billion yen)
▪ Promotion of high profitability by converting paddy fields into upland fields, generalization, and large plots (70 billion yen)
▪ Coronavirus infectious disease safety net strengthening grant (support for people in need, suicide measures, etc.) (14 billion yen)
III. Ensuring safety and security by promoting disaster prevention/mitigation and national resilience
(3.1414 trillion yen)

1. Promotion of disaster prevention/mitigation and national resilience (2.0936 trillion yen)

2. Acceleration of recovery and reconstruction from natural disasters (633.7 billion yen)

3. Ensuring the safety and security of the people (414.1 billion yen)

Supplementary budget additional expenditure total (19.1761 trillion yen)

**December 18, 2020:** Pfizer applied for approval from the MHLW for the use of the new coronavirus vaccine in Japan. This was the first application for approval of the new coronavirus vaccine in Japan, and it is expected that it will be decided whether to approve it by the end of February 2021 at the earliest.

This vaccine had already begun to be inoculated in the United States and the United Kingdom.

The Japanese government had basically agreed to receive supply for 60 million people by the end of June 2021. The government rushed to establish a system such as a dedicated refrigerator, dry ice, and low-temperature transportation in order to start vaccination to people in Japan in late February 2021.

**December 27, 2020:** Seven prefectures exceeded the criteria of “Stage IV”, the most serious level on the indicators of infection by the government subcommittees, as of December 22. “Stage IV” had been defined as “a stage that requires action to avoid the explosive spread of infection and malfunction of declared medical care delivery system” but the subcommittee.

MHLW’s figure on the bed usage rate of inpatients that can be secured at the maximum is

- Osaka prefecture 63.8%
- Hyogo prefecture 61.9%
- Gunma prefecture 61.8%
- Kochi prefecture 59.5%
- Aichi prefecture 55.5%
- Tokyo was 53.7%
- Hokkaido 51.1%

The bed usage rate of critically ill patients was 68.6% in Tokyo and 64.5% in Osaka.

**December 28, 2020:** The government started to suspend the new entry of foreigners from all over the world. This continues from December 28th to the end of January 2021. Some business traffic will continue (including businesspeople in/from 11 countries or regions such as China and Korea).

This is a response to the epidemic of a highly infectious new coronavirus variant in the United Kingdom and other countries, airport quarantine and detection in Tokyo.

Measures that exempt Japanese people and foreigners with a status of residence from waiting for 14 days under certain conditions when returning or entering Japan from a short-term business trip to a foreign country will also be suspended.

All entrants from countries and regions where a mutated virus has been confirmed are required to undergo inspection and submit a certificate of test result showing “negative” within 72 hours before departure, and also must take an inspection test when entering Japan.

**December 30, 2020:** [Comm] Nishimura, the Minister in charge of economic revitalization, posted an urgent message on his Twitter account in the evening by commenting that a state of emergency will likely be issued if the infection continues to spread. We need to protect people’s lives. We must control the infection at all costs. We would like to call on to spend the New Year holidays only with your family.”

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**The 3rd Wave (January 2021 - March 2021)**

**January 2, 2021:** Following the spread of the new coronavirus infection in the Tokyo metropolitan area, the four governors of Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa Prefectures met with the Minister
for Economic Revitalization, Nishimura, requested consideration for immediate issuance of the state of emergency.
In addition to setting a certain period of publicity to avoid confusion in social life, he also called for discussions with local governments on specific measures under the declaration.

January 4, 2021: Prime Minister Suga expressed the government’s plan to prepare for the vaccination to start by the end of February. He stated that the vaccination would start with medical staff, the elderly, and staff of facilities for the elderly and that the Prime Minister himself would take the initiative in vaccination.

January 5, 2021: The government subcommittee made a recommendation to the government to promptly issue a state of emergency targeting four prefectures including Tokyo. The subcommittee commented that the infection may spread rapidly nationwide if the infection situation in the metropolitan area does not subside.

January 7, 2021: The national government issued the state of emergency targeting the metropolitan area (Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa Prefectures) based on the Special Measures Act at the government’s new coronavirus response headquarters. The period is until February 7th.

January 7, 2021: Following the declaration of the state of emergency for the metropolitan area, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government decided on “emergency measures” in Tokyo. The Tokyo government requested the citizens of Tokyo to refrain from going out unnecessarily and urgently, especially after 8:00 pm and asked restaurants to shorten their business hours to 8:00 pm.

January 8, 2021: [Pol] The government started to consider introducing criminal penalties in cases such as when it violates hospitalization recommendations by amending the Infectious Diseases Control Law.

In discussions between the government and the ruling and opposition parties, the government is considering amending the Special Measures Act to impose penalties as a response to businesses that do not respond to requests for leave of absence. As a background of this, there had been reported a number of cases in which infected people do not follow the requests from local governments for accommodation treatment.

January 12, 2021: More prefectural governments made a request for the state of emergency for each prefecture (Osaka, Hyogo, Kyoto, Aichi, Gifu, and Tochigi) to the national government.

January 13, 2021: The state of emergency was expanded to 11 prefectures. Prime Minister Suga declared the emergency based on the Special Measures Act, targeting seven prefectures including Osaka, Hyogo, Kyoto (three prefectures in the western part of Japan), Aichi and Gifu (two prefectures in the central part of Japan), Fukuoka and Tochigi. The period is until February 7th likewise in the metropolitan area.

January 13, 2021: The government decided to stop the traffic of businesspeople in/from 11 countries and regions (see Dec. 28, 2020). As a result, foreigners will be completely suspended from entering Japan, except for special circumstances such as funerals and childbirth of relatives.

Last month, the government took steps to stop new foreigners from entering the country, but business people from 11 countries and regions, including China and South Korea, have continued to come and go. Some members of the ruling party and others had pointed out that this is confusing.

January 15, 2021: The Japanese Association of Medical Sciences, which is made up of medical societies, issued an urgent statement calling for no provisions with criminal penalties regarding the government’s amendment to the Infectious Diseases Control Law and considering criminal penalties for infected persons who refused hospitalization recommendations.
January 15, 2021: MHLW also announced to an expert meeting that it would revise the Infectious Diseases Control Law and indicated the intention that penalties can be imposed if the infected person refuses the request for accommodation treatment from the local government, refuses the investigation of the health center or makes a false declaration. The expert meeting members commented that the criminal punishment is too heavy.

January 19, 2021: [Epi] MHLW announced that the number of seriously ill people who had been confirmed infected with the new coronavirus and are receiving treatment in a respirator or intensive care reached 1,001 as of the 19th. This is a record high for 16 consecutive days since January 4th and exceeded 1,000 for the first time.

January 22, 2021: The Government approved the bills to amend the Infectious Diseases Control Law and the Act on Special Measures for Pandemic Influenza and New Infectious Diseases Preparedness and Response (the “Special Measures Act”) through the Cabinet’s decision. Japan Federation of Bar Associations made a statement opposing this amendment.

January 23, 2021: The number of people who died after being infected with the new coronavirus reached 5,064 nationwide.

January 25, 2021: Regarding the vaccine, MHLW instructed the local governments to establish a system in which all elderly people can receive the first vaccination within 9 weeks after the start of vaccination in late February. The ministry envisions that medical workers will be vaccinated first from late February and that a system will be secured to inoculate approximately 36 million elderly people by the end of March. Considering that Pfizer's vaccine is expected to require two doses at intervals of three weeks and assuming that the second dose will begin before everyone finishes the first dose, some local governments had shown their concern to secure the labour as well as inoculation venues.

January 28, 2021: [Pol] The third supplementary budget was approved at the Diet as proposed by the government (see December 15, 2020).

January 30, 2021: Three people from the same workplace in Saitama Prefecture were newly infected with the mutated coronavirus, which is spreading in the United Kingdom. Up to this date, a total of 15 people had been confirmed infected with the mutant virus nevertheless they had never stayed in the United Kingdom and had no contact with people who had arrived from the country where the mutant virus had been confirmed.

February 1, 2021: The government decided to lift the state of emergency for Tochigi Prefecture and extend it for 10 prefectures such as Tokyo and Osaka until March 7th based on the Special Measures Act. If the infection situation improved, it would be cancelled even before the deadline.

February 2, 2021: The Basic Policies were also revised in line with the extension of the state of emergency in 10 prefectures. “Including during the day” was newly added regarding the self-restraint of going out and moving to the target area of the state of emergency. The revised version continues to refrain from moving across prefectures and moving to areas where the infection is spreading as much as possible.

For restaurants, business hours continue to be shortened to 8:00 pm, and telework will be carried out even more thoroughly. Regarding the medical treatment, as the number of people who had been receiving medical treatment at home had increased due to the tightness of the beds at hospitals, the government is to improve the environment by lending pulse oximeters etc. so that they can quickly grasp the changes in the patients’ symptoms.
February 3, 2021: [Epi] Softbank Group and Rakuten, major private companies in Japan, began accepting applications and shipping test kits so that individuals can receive a PCR test to check for infection with the new coronavirus by saliva.

The SoftBank Group had been conducting PCR tests using saliva since September last year after receiving applications from companies and local governments. They began accepting individual applications from 3rd. The maximum charge is 5,500 yen per person, and the shipping fee is not included. Similarly, Rakuten started responding to individuals on January 28, and the charge is 7,980 yen including shipping per person. Both companies are to introduce medical institutions to the customers who hope to consult about the test results.

February 3, 2021: [Epi] 6,052 deaths in Japan (including 13 cruise ships passengers). The deaths reached 5,000 on January 23rd, it took only about 10 days to exceed 6,000.

February 3, 2021: [Digital] MHLW announced the problem in the notification of COCOA. Since the end of September 2020, some smartphone users have not been detected or notified of the new coronavirus contact on COCOA even if they had had close contacts with infected people. MHLW received a report about this defect from the private sector company subcontracted on January 25.

From the end of last year to the beginning of this year, there were inquiries and claims from app users pointing out that they had received no notification even though they had had contacts with a person who were tested positive. MHLW found, through investigation, that the smartphone users with the basic OS Android had not been detected or notified even if the conditions for close contact were met.

February 9, 2021: Regarding the new coronavirus vaccine developed by Pfizer, Minister of MHLW Tamura announced that the number of inoculations from one bottle is to be reduced from six times to five times, and requested local governments to establish a system for it.

Minister of MHLW, Mr. Tamura, explained that, according to Pfizer, it is possible to take 6 times from one bottle if you use a special syringe tube, and we are collecting syringes from medical device manufacturers. However, they are commonly used in Japan. If it’s a thing, you can only get it 5 times.

February 10, 2021: MHLW officially notified local governments about the guideline and Q&As regarding the amendment of the Infectious Diseases Control Law to introduce penalties in case of hospitalization recommendations are violated (also see Jan. 8, 2021).

The flow of hospitalization recommendations and measures
1) Hospitalization recommendation
2) Measures for hospitalization if 1) is not followed
3) Penalties (a fine of 500,000 yen or less) will be applied if the patient is not hospitalized by the specified start date of hospitalization without a justifiable reason, or if a person hospitalized by 1) or 2) escapes from the hospital.

The flow of active epidemiological investigation
1) Request for cooperation in active epidemiological investigations
2) “Order” when the person does not cooperate to 1) with no good reason
3) If the person who received the order of 2) refuses the investigation or makes a false answer without a justifiable reason, he/she will be subject to penalties (a fine of 300,000 yen or less).

February 13, 2021: The revised Special Measures Act came into effect. The government intends to further enhance its effectiveness by further supporting businesses affected by infection control measures and requesting cooperation from restaurants to shorten business hours.
February 14, 2021: MHLW announced that it officially approved the vaccine for the new coronavirus developed by Pfizer. This is the first time that a new coronavirus vaccine had been approved in Japan. Pfizer’s vaccine is intended for people who are 16 years and older and should be given twice at intervals of 3 weeks in principle. Inoculation is expected to begin on February 17, ahead of medical staff. The government signed a contract with Pfizer to supply 72 million people by the end of the year.

February 18, 2021: [Digital] MHLW launched the “COCOA defect investigation/recurrence prevention measures review team” with the General Deputy Director as the head and other health ministry officials. The team is to investigate the background, progress, and causalities of the defect of the COCOA version 1.1.4 and later versions.

February 18, 2021: [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS and Android version 1.2.2).

February 26, 2021: The Minister in charge of vaccination, Kono announced that the government negotiated with Pfizer and generally agreed to receive the vaccine on a delivery schedule in which all elderly people aged 65 and over will be vaccinated twice by the end of June. The vaccine for the elderly is expected to be delivered to local governments nationwide by the end of June.

February 28, 2021: The state of emergency was removed in 6 prefectures.

March 1, 2021: Starting this week, the new coronavirus vaccine was delivered to all prefectures nationwide for the priority vaccination of healthcare workers this month. The vaccine developed by Pfizer has been inoculated in advance to about 40,000 people at 100 medical institutions nationwide since 17th February. Following this, priority vaccinations began this month for approximately 4.7 million healthcare workers, and vaccines were delivered to prefectures nationwide this week. A total of 1,000 boxes were delivered in the following week, up to a maximum of 1.17 million inoculations.

March 3, 2021: MHLW decided to add 13 new countries and regions to the post-entry waiting measures currently being taken with five countries and regions as a border measure for mutant viruses.

March 5, 2021: Prime Minister Suga expressed the intention to extend the deadline of March 7 for the state of emergency of 1 metropolitan area and 3 prefectures by 2 weeks to March 21st.

March 15, 2021: A demonstration experiment began in Japan as the development of a universal digital certificate that displays the results of PCR tests for the new coronavirus and vaccination history on a smartphone app is underway. The experiment is conducted with a smartphone app called “Common Pass” developed by the World Economic Forum and others, which can be used when boarding an airplane.

March 18, 2021: The governors of one metropolitan area and three prefectures agreed to request their citizens to refrain from going out from March 22 (the next day after the state of emergency was lifted) to March 31. For restaurants, etc., the request for shortening business hours continues, although it will be relaxed from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Restriction requests for events will continue requesting the maximum capacity of 5,000 people or 50% of the capacity, whichever is larger, and the closure time of events is 9 pm.

March 21, 2021: The state of emergency was removed in all rest prefectures.

March 29, 2021: Governor Yoshimura of Osaka Prefecture showed the intention to request the national government to apply “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures” to Osaka Prefecture so that they can take intensive measures even if they are not under a state of emergency.

The 3rd Wave (January 2021 - March 2021)
April 5, 2021: Following the re-expansion of the new coronavirus infection, the “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures” was applied to the three prefectures of Osaka, Hyogo, and Miyagi for the first time in Japan from April 5 to May 5.

April 9, 2021: Kono, the Minister for Regulatory Reform, revealed that there is a concrete prospect to secure the necessary amount of vaccine for double vaccination to about 36 million elderly people nationwide by the end of June 2021.

April 9, 2021: The government applied “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures” to the three prefectures of Tokyo, Kyoto, and Okinawa starting from April 12. The period is until May 5 for Kyoto, Okinawa, and until May 11 for Tokyo. Prefectures with “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures”: 6 (Osaka, Hyogo, Miyagi, Tokyo, Kyoto, and Okinawa) as of this day.

April 12, 2021: Priority vaccination of the new corona vaccine for the elderly began at least about 120 locations nationwide.

April 16, 2021: The government decided to apply “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures” to four more prefectures of Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, and Aichi from April 20. The governors of these prefectures made a request to the national government a day before. Prefectures with “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures”: 10 (Osaka, Hyogo, Miyagi, Tokyo, Kyoto, Okinawa, Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, and Aichi) as of this day.

April 20, 2021: MHLW coordinated the dispatch of nurses through the ministries and agencies that have jurisdiction over medical institutions in response to the tightness of severely ill beds “Osaka Corona Severe Center” in Osaka Prefecture. The details of coordination are as follows:
  - MEXT: 35 nurses from 22 university hospitals
  - MHLW: more than a dozen nurses from labour accident hospitals, etc.
  - National Police Agency and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism (MLIT): 65 nurses from other hospitals

April 20, 2021: The Governor of Osaka Prefecture, Yoshimura, and the Governor of Tokyo Metropolitan government, Koike, requested the issuance of a state of emergency for approx. a three-week to one-month period.

The 4th Wave (late April 2021 – late June 2021)

April 21, 2021: [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (Android version 1.2.3). A bug on COCOA was found and the app was fixed in February. However, there was a still defect that notifications are automatically sent only if it is restarted regularly on some devices of Android OS. In the revised version, restarting is no longer necessary, yet the notification may be delayed or users may not be able to receive it if the Android device is set to power saving mode etc.

April 21, 2021: Governors of Kyoto Prefecture and Tokyo Metropolitan Government requested the national government for the issuance of a state of emergency for the prefectures. Governor of Ehime Prefecture requested the application of “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures.”

April 23, 2021: One-third of healthcare workers had received the first vaccine by this day, Minister of Regulatory Reform, Kono, announced.

April 25, 2021: The state of emergency was declared in 4 prefectures (Tokyo, Osaka, Hyogo, and Kyoto). This is the third time. The period is for approx. two weeks, until May 11.
**April 26, 2021:** [Epi] Over 10,000 deaths in Japan (excluding cruise ships). Approximately 80% had died since December last year.

**April 28, 2021:** Executives and experts from economic organizations put together a proposal calling for a radical overhaul of the vaccination system. This proposal was compiled by 24 members of the “Japan Association of New Economy” made by IT companies.

**April 30, 2021:** The first batch of vaccines developed by Moderna arrived. It is scheduled to be shipped multiple times in May, and the Japanese government had contracted to receive 50 million doses of the Moderna vaccine by September.

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**May 9, 2021:** “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures” was expanded to 8 prefectures with the addition of Hokkaido, Gifu and Mie prefectures until May 31 for all of those.

**May 12, 2021:** The state of emergency was extended in 4 prefectures (Tokyo, Osaka, Hyogo, and Kyoto) with 2 prefectures (Aichi and Fukuoka) newly added until May 31 for all of those. This decision was made by the national government on May 7th.

**May 17, 2021:** Reservations for the new coronavirus vaccination at large-scale venues set up by the government started in Tokyo and Osaka.

**May 21, 2021:** MHLW announced that they officially approved the vaccine for the new coronavirus of Moderna and AstraZeneca. The expert group of the MHLW also agreed to approve all of them as their effectiveness had been recognized.

**May 24, 2021:** Inoculation at the large-scale inoculation venues set up by the government in Tokyo and Osaka began. It is expected by the government that it will be possible to inoculate up to 15,000 people a day in total at the two locations. The government hopes to accelerate the inoculation by opening the center.

**May 29, 2021:** The government started coordinating the vaccination at workplaces as early as mid-June, targeting not only employees but also their families. The government is to use Moderna’s vaccine for workplace inoculation.

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**June 3, 2021:** Regarding the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, Shigeru Omi, Chairman of the government subcommittee, pointed out at the House of Representatives Welfare and Labour Committee that it is not normal to hold such an event in the current pandemic situation. He added that, if we are going to implement it in this situation, it is the duty and responsibility of the organizer to make the event as small as possible and strengthen the management system as much as possible.

**June 7, 2021:** [Digital] MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS and Android version 1.2.4).

**June 8, 2021:** The Olympic Minister, Marukawa, announced that it is difficult to postpone the Tokyo Games.

**June 16, 2021:** All local governments nationwide are expected to complete the vaccination for the elderly by the end of July.

**June 17, 2021:** Since the large-scale vaccination center set up by the government had some vacancies in the reservation frame, the Ministry of Defence significantly started to inoculate by reducing the target age of 65 years or older to 18 to 64 years old.
June 17, 2021: Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato announced that the government is to issue “vaccine passports” certifying vaccination against the new coronavirus in the form of a paper to start in mid- or late July.

June 18, 2021: [Pol] This fiscal year’s “Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2021” was presented at the government’s Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy. According to it, as a response to infectious diseases based on the new coronavirus, in an emergency, the government is to promote countermeasures under a stronger system and a command, promptly commercialize therapeutic drugs and vaccines and secure an inoculation system. The report also mentions that the government is to consider legal measures so that effective measures can be taken onward.

June 21, 2021: Occupational inoculation at companies and universities began in earnest. MEXT started it at 17 universities in at least 11 prefectures.

June 22, 2021: Regarding “school mass vaccination,” MEXT notified the Board of Education nationwide that it is not recommended at this time as the government has few opportunities to explain to parents and tends to create pressure to sympathize with vaccination. The Minister of MEXT, Hagiuda, emphasized the above and indicated that it is desirable for those who wish to receive individual vaccination by a family doctor with the consent of their parents.

June 30, 2021: As a countermeasure against the new coronavirus of the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, the government revised the guide for local governments. If an infected person appears in a pre-camp for overseas athletes, all the people who were camp together will be put on standby in a private room until a negative result is confirmed, and practice will be stopped.

The 4th Wave (late April 2021 – late June 2021)

July 8, 2021: The government decided to issue a “state of emergency” in Tokyo from July 12.

July 9, 2021: Following the decision to issue a fourth emergency declaration, the government also decided to hold the Tokyo Olympics games without the spectators/audience in all the venues in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama, Chiba, and the other three prefectures.

July 8, 2021: There was a confusion caused by the utterance by the Minister in charge of Economic Revitalization, Nishimura, that would request restaurants to stop serving alcohol during the stage of emergency, and would like to work on compliance while sharing information with financial institutions regarding the stores that do not respond to the request.

July 8, 2021: The Cabinet Secretariat New Coronavirus Infectious Disease Control Promotion Office and National Tax Agency Liquor Tax Division notified “Regarding suspension of liquor transactions with restaurants that do not respond to requests for closure due to suspension of liquor provision (request).” The All Japan Liquor Merchants Association released a protest note to the notification on the following day (July 9).

July 12, 2021: The state of emergency was declared in Tokyo, and the period is from July 12 to August 22. This is the fourth “state of emergency”. It was also decided to extend the state of emergency to Okinawa Prefecture to August 22. “Semi-emergency coronavirus measures” in four prefectures of Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, and Osaka, is extended until August 22 July as well, while it is lifted for five prefectures of Hokkaido, Aichi, Kyoto, Hyogo and Fukuoka on 11th as planned.
**July 15, 2021:** MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS and Android version 1.2.5).

**The 5th Wave (late July 2021 – September 2021) →→→**

**July 23, 2021:** The Tokyo Olympic games started

**July 26, 2021:** Applications for a “vaccine passport” began to be accepted in municipalities nationwide. For the time being, the exemption and mitigation of quarantine measures will be available in five countries, including Italy, but the government hopes to expand the target countries.

**July 30, 2021:** The government decided to add four prefectures, Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, and Osaka, to the target areas of the state of emergency declaration, and to apply semi-emergency coronavirus measures to five prefectures, Hokkaido, Ishikawa, Hyogo, Kyoto, and Fukuoka. The period is from August 2-31, and the due for the state of emergency of Tokyo and Okinawa was decided to be extended accordingly.

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**August 2, 2021:** Regarding the medical care provision system for the new coronavirus, Prime Minister Suga held a relevant ministerial meeting to secure the necessary beds for critically ill patients and those at high risk of becoming severely ill, and for other people, basic medical treatment at home. He indicated that the government is to organize a system so that those people can be hospitalized immediately if symptoms become worse.

**August 5, 2021:** The government decided to add eight prefectures, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Shizuoka, Aichi, Shiga, and Kumamoto, to the areas to which the semi-emergency coronavirus measures to be applied with the period from August 8-31.

**August 6, 2021:** The number of people confirmed infected in Japan exceeded 1 million. Since July 29, the number of infected people had exceeded 10,000 almost every day.

**August 7, 2021:** The state of emergency and semi-emergency measures had been expanded to 19 prefectures in total until August 31.
- State of emergency: 6 (Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, Osaka, and Okinawa)
- Semi-emergency coronavirus measures: 13 (5 (Hokkaido, Ishikawa, Kyoto, Hyogo, Fukuoka), and newly added 8 (Fukushima, Tochigi, Gunma, Ibaraki, Shizuoka, Aichi, Shiga, and Kumamoto)) on this day.

**August 9, 2021:** Prime Minister Suga announced that the total number of vaccinations in Japan had exceeded 100 million times and showed his intention to proceed with the inoculation twice for all citizens.

**August 12, 2021:** MHLW coordinated with local governments so that patients who are treated at home can receive the newly approved therapeutic agents so-called “antibody cocktail therapy” if they are hospitalized for a short period of time.

**August 13, 2021:** The Tokyo Metropolitan Government started “antibody cocktail therapy” for people who had taken treatment at accommodation facilities.

**August 17, 2021:** MHLW significantly increased the remuneration for online medical care in order to strengthen the health observation of patients undergoing medical treatment at home. 4,640 yen for the initial visit (2.2 times higher than before), and 3,230 yen for the return visit (4.4 times higher).
August 17, 2021: The government decided to add 7 prefectures, Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Shizuoka, Kyoto, Hyogo, and Fukuoka, to the target areas of the state of emergency with the period from August 20 to September 12. In addition, during the same period, the semi-emergency coronavirus measures was newly applied to the 10 prefectures of Miyagi, Yamanashi, Toyama, Gifu, Mie, Okayama, Hiroshima, Kagawa, Ehime, and Kagoshima until August 31. It was also decided to extend the period for 6 prefectures under the state of emergency as well as 13 prefectures under the semi-emergency.

Regarding the cancellation of the declarations, Prime Minister Suga indicated completing vaccination twice to nearly half of all the people and securing a medical care provision system as the prerequisite.

August 20, 2021: Minister of MHLW, Tamura, announced to conduct a fact-finding survey to see if the subsidies paid to medical institutions that have secured beds are being used appropriately, saying that the actual number of hospitalized patients is smaller than the number of secured beds announced by the local government.

August 23, 2021: Before the opening of the Tokyo Paralympic Games, a welcome party for the IPC = (International Paralympic Committee) Chairman Parsons and directors was held on the night of the 23rd. There were about 40 people including Prime Minister Suga and Chairman Hashimoto of the Organizing Committee attended.

August 25, 2021: The government decided to add eight prefectures, Hokkaido, Miyagi, Gifu, Aichi, Mie, Shiga, Okayama, and Hiroshima, to the target areas of the state of emergency. The government also decided to apply the semi-emergency measures to 4 prefectures of Kochi, Saga, Nagasaki, and Miyazaki. The period is from August 27 to September 12.

August 27, 2021: MEXT set the criteria for judging class closure at schools nationwide for the first time. If multiple infected people are confirmed in the class, the guide advises considering implementing it within 5 to 7 days. MEXT notified it to the Board of Education nationwide.

August 31, 2021: [Epi] The number of people who died after being infected with the new coronavirus was 65 people nationwide as of this day, the highest in the fifth wave. MHLW announced that the number of patients who were seriously ill reached 2,110 out of all the people confirmed infected, the highest ever for the last 19 consecutive days.

September 6, 2021: Regarding the Pfizer vaccine, Mr. Kono, the minister in charge of regulatory reform, announced that the supply scheduled from next month to December has been advanced because it is expected that all will be imported by the end of next month.

September 8, 2021: The government subcommittee gave a new idea of the indicators for deciding to cancel the state of emergency.

BEFORE: In the stages that indicate the status of infection and medical care, “Stage IV”, the most serious, was considered to correspond to a state of emergency. It was required to have the prospect of being lowered to “Stage II” after the cancellation. For example:

- The “bed usage rate” and “severe illness usage rate” are less than 50%, and it is expected that they will drop to less than 20% after the declaration is lifted.
- The number of recuperators is less than 30 per 100,000 population, and it is expected that it will drop to less than 20 after the cancellation, and
- The number of newly infected people has been less than 25 per 100,000 in the last week, and it is expected that it will drop to less than 15 after the cancellation.
The cancellation of the declaration is to be judged comprehensively based on these indicators while listening to the opinions of each local government.

**AFTER:** When deciding to cancel the state of emergency, it is advised to pay more significant attention to that medical care is not tight such as the decrease in the number of moderately ill patients and home care recipients, and the decrease in cases where emergency transportation is difficult.

- As a prerequisite, it is assumed that the “number of newly infected people” has been on a stable downward trend for about two weeks.

Regarding the medical situation
- In addition to the “bed usage rate” and “severe bed usage rate” being less than 50%, respectively.
- It was mentioned that the percentage of people who have been hospitalized among all the recuperators and the “hospitalization rate” are improving.
- The continuing downward trend in the number of severely ill patients and the number of moderately ill patients,
- “The total number of people who are receiving medical treatment at home and those who are adjusting medical treatment” is steadily declining toward the level of about 60 people per 100,000 population, especially in metropolitan areas, or is kept at an appropriate scale. It also lists indicators based on the experience of this infection spread, such as being present.

Furthermore, based on the fact that medical care other than corona support was also affected,
- It is also mentioned that the number of “cases where emergency transportation is difficult” is decreasing in major large city areas.

**September 8, 2021:** Digital MHLW started the distribution of a revised version of the COCOA (iOS and Android version 1.2.6).

**September 9, 2021:** The government decided to extend the state of emergency of 21 prefectures, which is due on September 12, until September 30 in 19 prefectures, while the two prefectures will shift to semi-emergency measures. It also decided to lift 6 prefectures out of the 12 prefectures to which the semi-emergency measures are applied, and extend the rest 6 prefectures until September 30. As a result, the target areas of the state of emergency will be 19 prefectures, and the semi-emergency measures will be applied to 8 prefectures.

**September 18, 2021:** MHLW changed its policy regarding “antibody cocktail therapy” that can be used for mildly ill patients. Initially, it was stated that some medical institutions would introduce it on a trial basis because of rare side effects, but after confirming whether safety can be ensured, it was decided to approve the use on home visits nationwide.

**September 26, 2021:** The governors of Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa’s metropolitan areas, requested the national government to show specific contents of the mitigation after cancelling the state of emergency.

**September 27, 2021:** MHLW notified the basic idea on the sales of antigen test kit to the general public at pharmacies and drug stores.

**September 28, 2021:** The government decided to lift all 19 prefectures' state of emergency and semi-emergency coronavirus measures in 8 prefectures on September 30. It is the first time in about half a year that no state of emergency nor semi-emergency measures issued in any region.
**September 30, 2021:** The state of emergency and the semi-emergency coronavirus measures were removed in all prefectures.

**→→→ The 5th Wave (mid-July 2021 – September 2021)**

**October 4, 2021:** Fumio Kishida became Prime Minister, and the Kishida Cabinet inaugurated.

**October 7, 2021:** The Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), Saito, mentioned that the government is considering to review the re-operation of “Go-To-Travel”, which had been suspended due to the spread of the new coronavirus. He clarified that they will have a close look on how to disperse the users without concentrating on Saturdays and Sundays based on the issues pointed out before.

**October 8, 2021:** Following the approval of the sale of the new coronavirus antigen test kit to the general public, sales of the test kit began at pharmacies.

**October 14, 2021:** Prime Minister Kishida exchanged opinions with Chairman Omi of the government subcommittee on the framework of the overall picture of measures against the new coronavirus, and indicated a policy to visualize the contribution of hospitals to corona response.

**October 16, 2021:** MHLW asked prefectures to increase the acceptance of inpatients by another 20% from the peak of this summer as preparation for the re-emergence of the new coronavirus infection.

In the so-called fifth wave during summer, when the Delta variant was prevalent, the number of infected people nationwide far exceeded the initial expectations, and the total number of home care recipients temporarily exceeded 130,000.

**October 21, 2021:** Tokyo and Osaka decided to lift the time saving request for restaurants from the October 25. Tokyo is targeted at certified stores, and restrictions on liquor serving hours or business hours will be removed.

**October 26, 2021:** In Japan, more than 70% of the total population had been vaccinated twice with the new coronavirus vaccine. The number of people who completed the second vaccination was 88,977,909, accounting for 70.1% of the total population according to MHLW’s latest report. The total population includes children under the age of vaccination.

**October 28, 2021:** Regarding the third inoculation of the vaccine, the subcommittee of experts from MHLW agreed that it will target all those who had completed the second inoculation. MHLW plans to start the third vaccination in order from medical staff in December.