

## Establishment of Nepal's first provincial infectious and communicable disease hospital in Gandaki Province

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### Abstract

In December 2019, Sudden deaths of people due to pneumonia caused by the new Coronavirus (SARS-Cov-2) in Wuhan, China and its rapid spread to other countries forced World Health Organization to declare pandemic on 12 March 2021. With first case on 13 January 2020, Nepal started preparing to manage COVID – 19. The government of Nepal made historic decision to establish an infectious and communicable disease hospital in each province. The Gandaki province government decided to establish provincial infectious and communicable disease hospital on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The newly established hospital has now become Nepal's first provincial infectious and communicable disease hospital. Future research will establish the effectiveness of provincial dedicated infectious and communicable disease hospital.

**Keywords:** Infectious diseases, hospital

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## INTRODUCTION

In the late December 2019, infectious respiratory virus, later named SARS-CoV-2, Coronavirus created anxiety and stress by causing sudden death of people due to similar pneumonia with unknown source in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.<sup>1,2</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed global pandemic nature of COVID – 19 caused by SARS CoV-2 and declared pandemic on 12 March 2020.<sup>1</sup> The pandemic forced Nepal to prepare, address and plan to deal with the current global outbreak and other infectious and communicable diseases after its first case on 13 January 2020.<sup>3</sup>

The Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALY) lost due to communicable diseases in Nepal is 49 % which is quite high in the global context.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, Nepal needs dedicated hospital for infectious and communicable diseases in each province in the new federal structure.

There were no provincial hospitals dedicated to manage cases of infectious and communicable diseases in Nepal. The government of Nepal made a historic decision to establish an infectious disease hospital in each province.<sup>5</sup> Here is the brief description of the process, implementation of the decision and the establishment of Nepal's first provincial Infectious and Communicable Disease Hospital (ICDH) in Gandaki province. The author reviewed the documents used for the establishment of the hospital.<sup>6</sup>

The Gandaki province government decided to convert Lekhnath Community Lions Hospital (LCLH) located in Mohoriya, Lekhnath of Kaski district to ICDH on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2020. On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020, the Gandaki province government decided the name of the hospital as "Infectious and Communicable Disease Hospital (ICDH), Gandaki Province, Kaski".<sup>6</sup> The hospital is the Nepal's first provincial infectious disease hospital. The LCLH was under operation providing general health services until COVID – 19 pandemic hit hard in Gandaki Province. Then, upon an agreement between the Gandaki province government and the LCLH team, ICDH is now a government hospital which was planned to be managed under the leadership of the provincial Ministry of Social Development (MoSD). The LCLH

was providing health care services and was operational because of extra-ordinary generous donation by the couple, Rewatiraman Paudel and Shanta Devi Paudel and many others and funds generated from the user fees.

The Gandaki province in Nepal realized the importance of a dedicated hospital to manage all the infectious and communicable diseases which covers nearly 2.5 million people in the province. It is unprecedented in the context of Nepal.

The world has faced multiple global pandemics in different times. After the announcement of COVID – 19 as global pandemic by the WHO, the health system started to face challenges all over the world. The establishment of Nepal's first provincial level hospital for infectious and communicable diseases is a necessary step. Further implementation research needs to be designed and studied to produce evidence about the effectiveness of establishment of provincial level infectious and communicable disease hospital in Nepal.

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