

## Mayor Kiyomoto's Message

Wednesday April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

Medical institutions in Himeji City are currently providing dedicated medical care to patients, but coronavirus infections have not yet been resolved. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the doctors, nurses, and staff who have been working tirelessly during this difficult time.

Once a person is identified to have tested positive for Covid-19, the Public Health Center will conduct a thorough investigation to identify the people they have been in close contact with, and request that they stay at home.

The criteria for being in “close contact” are defined as follows:

- Cohabiting with the patient.
- Treating the patient without proper infection control measures.
- Being in contact with the patient for more than 15 minutes at a distance of 1 meter.

If a person treats a coronavirus patient while wearing a mask, they are not deemed to be a close contact.

Medical institutions that have been treating Covid-19 patients in Himeji City are taking sufficient measures, and those medical personnel are not classified as high-risk contacts.

Nevertheless, there have been reports of people being refused the use of facilities, such as childcare services, purely because they have been linked to medical facilities where a Covid-19 patient has visited or has been hospitalized.

The people of these medical facilities are also concerned that they may become infected, but if they are unable to provide medical care, they cannot protect the lives of their patients, or prevent the spread of the infection in the community.

Medical staff will be unable to provide proper medical care if they are unable to come to work out of fear of damaging rumours, potentially leading to the collapse of the medical system, which is currently a major concern.

Everyone is at risk of contracting Covid-19. The rumours and falsehoods being spread on social media by some people may be incredibly damaging.

The government firmly supports our medical institutions. We ask all citizens of Himeji to come together in support of our medical care providers.

With that in mind, Himeji Castle has been illuminated in blue. Whenever you see the blue Himeji Castle, please express your gratitude to those struggling in the medical field.

Right now, we must fight coronavirus. In order to prevent the spread of infection in the future, we ask for your cooperation in avoiding “The Three C’s” and acting carefully.