



SARS in Singapore: An Academic Infection Control Perspective

Paul Tambyah

Department of Medicine
National University of Singapore, Singapore

Much has been written about the epidemiology and virology of SARS and numerous guidelines have been published for the infection control and public health measures believed to have successfully controlled the spread of the virus. With the benefit of two years of reflection, we are now perhaps in a better position to understand what worked and what did not work. While many questions appear to have been answered by the voluminous papers produced, these have been mainly in the basic sciences of virology and early therapeutics and diagnostics. I will review some of what we know from Singapore and other settings which were affected by this novel coronavirus. However, numerous outstanding issues remain outstanding. These include: identifying the chain of contagion, recognizing the disease early without a reliable rapid diagnostic test, appropriate use of personal protective equipment and isolation especially in the prevention of super spreading events. It is clear that many issues need to be addressed if clinicians are to be able to confront the virus adequately should it reappear in the next few months or years.