



# TACKLING COVID-19 CASE STUDY

## OVERVIEW

The year 2020 presented an unexpected challenge, as countries across the globe reeled from the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic. By March 2020, Qatar's Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) began reporting COVID-19 cases in the country. The Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) immediately introduced a range of proactive measures across our construction sites to amplify our existing healthcare infrastructure, which helped us delay the onset of the spread. We recorded the first case within our workforce on 13 April 2020, six weeks after the first case was recorded in the country.

## CHALLENGE

With over 18,000 workers on the ground every day, our priority was to minimise the risk of infection among our workforce and ensure their safety. During this time, it was also crucial to maintain awareness through clear and constant communication with the workers.

“The SC workers benefitted from our pre-existing comprehensive medical framework that enabled us to quickly implement preventative measures across SC sites. We worked closely with our contractors and workers, leveraging mutual support and cooperation to move forward through this challenge.”

**Mahmoud Qutub**  
Executive Director, Workers' Welfare Department (WWD)

## APPROACH

The SC's WWD was quick to take all necessary precautions for workers, in line with the COVID-19 infection prevention and control guidelines recommended by the MoPH. We immediately implemented disinfection protocols at our medical facilities, and established quarantine rooms at all SC sites and accommodation. We ensured every project site received masks and sanitisers, and that our workers were social distancing. All non-essential visitors and other contracting parties were prohibited from accessing SC sites.

Our proactive strategy enabled us to manage the spread of COVID-19 on our projects for up to six weeks until the first case was reported. We leveraged our existing network of medical clinics across all SC sites and accommodation to provide medical care.

### 1 RISK ASSESSMENT

The SC conducted a risk assessment exercise for our accommodation, kitchen facilities and high-risk workers.

- High-risk workers who had chronic diseases and/ or were above 55 years were temporarily demobilised and relocated to a centralised accommodation facility. They continued to receive their salaries, free food and accommodation.
- Workers were temporarily demobilised from high-risk accommodations (i.e locations with a cluster of cases). Nine percent of the SC workforce in decentralised accommodations were relocated to centralised accommodation facilities.
- Caterers who did not adapt to the MoPH guidelines were replaced with low-risk ones. A list of recommended food items to boost immunity and a list of prohibited items were shared with caterers.

### 2 COMMUNICATION WITH WORKERS

The SC maintained constant dialogue with our workers through several channels to ensure they were kept informed about the measures in place for their safety.

- Awareness sessions were conducted with an in-house health expert.
- 180,000+ residents (including SC workers) were given access to a COVID-19 awareness app.
- Mental health awareness campaign to support workers during COVID-19 launched with the MoPH and Hamad Medical Corporation. Content distributed to over 18,000 workers via SMS and 15 embassies.

**128**  
Workers' Welfare Forums conducted on Zoom

**1,181**  
Follow-up interviews conducted with workers who tested positive

### 3 WELFARE INSPECTIONS

COVID-19 inspections were carried out daily across SC construction and accommodation sites, to ensure the following:

- Hygiene and sanitation of on-site clinics
- Social distancing in dining halls and buses
- Sanitisation and hygiene
- Compliance of wearing masks
- Temperature checks

**92**  
Inspectors

**3,350**  
Task-specific inspections (since 25 March 2020)

### 4 ISOLATION MEASURES

In early May, with the guidance and approval of the MoPH, we introduced our own 1,000 bed-capacity isolation facility for treating workers infected with COVID-19. This was to ensure that the SC could monitor and maintain strict quarantine protocol to minimise the spread of infection among the rest of the workforce.

- Patient data managed by The Phoenix Partnership (TPP) software in parallel with the MoPH's Cerner Medical Records System
- Colour-coded wristband system, representing different stages of recovery
- Free WiFi and Ooredoo top-up cards provided
- Daily food parcels delivered

**9**  
Medical staff (holding Primary Health Care Corporation licence)

**1,077**  
Medical consultations

## RESULT

The WWD recorded a strong recovery rate, demonstrating the first-class treatment offered to our workforce. About 1,185 of our workers have tested positive to date, of which 1,182 have recovered.

The SC's pre-emptive health and safety measures helped us to mobilise quickly and keep the pandemic at bay. As of 13 August 2020, we closed the SC Isolation Facility due to a significant drop in the number of active cases. We continue to review the situation on a daily basis and follow the MoPH guidelines to protect the health and safety of all construction workers and staff.

“We already had the necessary medical infrastructure in place, with clinics set up across all SC sites as part of our Workers' Welfare Standards. We have successfully tested workers and are providing the necessary care and support for positive cases.”

**Dr Ihab M. Fouad**  
Occupational Health Consultant, WWD

**17,802**  
SC workers currently on site

**300,000**  
Masks distributed to SC workers

**3,653**  
Total workers tested

**1,182**  
Workers recovered to date

**851**  
Peak active cases

**785**  
Total workers treated at the SC's COVID-19 Isolation Facility