

Coronavirus cases in Wuhan may be ‘just tip of the iceberg,’ expert says



A medical worker in a protective suit adjusts a drip bag for a patient at a hospital, following an outbreak of the new coronavirus in Wuhan. -Reuters

The thousands of coronavirus cases in the Chinese city of Wuhan, the center of the epidemic, is likely “just the tip of the iceberg,” a medical expert said.

David Hui Shu-cheong, a professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said the official count of 5,000 only reflects severe cases of the virus where patients have been admitted to a hospital, the South China Morning Post reported.

“There are many community cases that remain undiagnosed — unlike in Hong Kong, where cases are more carefully handled, including the mild ones,” Hui said.

Li Lanjuan, China’s National Health Commission’s coronavirus committee, said that lack of supplies is preventing the country from doing more aggressive tests for the virus, according to state media.

Li said Monday that that “not everyone can get tested” since there are not enough testing kits.

“Early detection, early diagnosis, early isolation, and early treatment cannot be done in Wuhan at the moment,” Li said. “I hope that the country can support Wuhan [more].”



Medical workers transfer patients to the newly completed Huoshenshan temporary field Hospital in Wuhan on Tuesday. -EPA

The virus has killed 425 people in China and infected more than 20,000 others.

Most of the deaths have been in the Hubei province, which contains the city of Wuhan and where the virus was first detected in December.

With Post wires

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