



## Article Title

Fangcang shelter hospitals: a novel concept for responding to public health emergencies

## Citation

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## Abstract

Fangcang shelter hospitals are a novel public health concept. They were implemented for the first time in China in February, 2020, to tackle the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak. The Fangcang shelter hospitals in China were large-scale, temporary hospitals, rapidly built by converting existing public venues, such as stadiums and exhibition centres, into health-care facilities. They served to isolate patients with mild to moderate COVID-19 from their families and communities, while providing medical care, disease monitoring, food, shelter, and social activities.

We document the development of Fangcang shelter hospitals during the COVID-19 outbreak in China and explain their three key characteristics (rapid construction, massive scale, and low cost) and five essential functions (isolation, triage, basic medical care, frequent monitoring and rapid referral, and essential living and social engagement).

Fangcang shelter hospitals could be powerful components of national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as future epidemics and public health emergencies.

## Summary

Other countries facing the COVID-19 pandemic should consider using Fangcang shelter hospitals as part of their public health response. Future design and construction of large public venues (eg, stadiums, convention centres, exhibition centres, gymnasiums, factories, and warehouses) should integrate features facilitating the conversion of these infrastructures to Fangcang shelter hospitals, such as interior equipment that can be rapidly removed, entrances that are large enough for hospital beds, and ventilation systems that reduce the risk of cross-infection. By embracing Fangcang shelter hospitals, many countries and communities worldwide could boost their response to the current COVID-19 pandemic as well as future epidemics and disasters.