

Guang Zeng, China CDC's Former Chief Expert of Epidemiology

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Guang Zeng was born in Beijing in 1946 and completed his undergraduate studies in the Medical Department of Hebei Medical University in 1970. Zeng then completed a master's degree in epidemiology from Peking Medical College in 1982. Zeng served as a researcher and PhD supervisor as China CDC's Chief Expert of Epidemiology (2000–2019); a counselor of the Beijing Municipal Government (2007–present); the seventh chair of the Public Health Branch of the Chinese Medical Association; the founder and honorary consultant of the Chinese Field Epidemiology Training Program (CFETP); a member of the Public Health Emergencies Expert Group of the National Health Commission (NHC)

of the People's Republic of China.

The CFETP, which Zeng founded in 2001, has blossomed across the country and has trained almost 500 talented students with practical capabilities to serve as the backbone for central and local CDCs. Hundreds of CFETP graduates played an important role on the frontlines in the prevention and treatment of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

When the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic occurred in 2003, Zeng was hired as a consultant to the joint headquarters of the capital to lead a team to investigate the Peking University People's Hospital, which was the most severely infected hospital. He put forward the proposal to close the hospital and transfer SARS patients to the outer suburbs, which was then immediately adopted and implemented by the government to establish the Beijing Xiaotangshan Hospital within seven days. On April 28, 2003, he was invited by the Ministry of Health (now known as the NHC) to give a lecture on the scientific prevention and treatment measures for SARS to the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. His public health measures proposed mainly around isolation were adopted by the Party Central Committee.

On January 18, 2020, Zeng was selected as a member of the high-level expert group on the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 from the NHC and was dispatched to Wuhan to carry out investigations. On the morning of January 20, he stated to the leaders of the State Council of the People's Republic of China that the Spring Festival transport season had begun and that it was necessary to learn historical lessons from the 1967 Spring Festival transport season that led to the outbreak of meningitis across the country. At the press conference of the NHC that afternoon, on behalf of the expert group, he called for “people from Wuhan not to leave and for people from other places not to go in.”

In recent years, Zeng led his team to investigate other major public health emergencies including the suspected case of “sudden death of unknown cause in Yunnan” that lasted for more than 20 years and the “methotrexate drug damage” incident that affected 12 provincial-level administrative divisions (PLADs) including Shanghai Municipality and Beijing Municipality. He dedicated himself to eliminating potential health risks that seriously threatened people's health.

He is the winner of special government allowances from the State Council and has won the National May 1 Labor Day Medal, the Science and the Technological Achievement Award from the Ministry of Health, the National Family Planning Commission, and the Chinese Preventive Medicine Association.

Zeng has been conducting research on the theory and practice of public health for a long time and proposed new concepts such as the “five public” attributes and “zero-level prevention” of public health. He has edited the *Modern Epidemiology Methods and Application*, *Modern Epidemiology*, *New Thinking of Chinese Public Health and Health*, and *Chinese Public Health Theory*, etc.

Though retired, Zeng's role as an epidemiologist contributed significantly to the protection of China's public health, the research and development of modern epidemiological methods, and insurance of public safety.

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