

## Correspondence

# Emphasizing truthfulness in COVID-19 test declarations

### ABSTRACT

In previous correspondence, it was explained that faking COVID-19 diagnostic tests and vaccination certifications posits serious concerns for matters of ethics and economics. With this, we suggest, in this paper, the importance of giving emphasis to being truthful in declaring their COVID-19 diagnostic test results and vaccination certificates. Also, in being truthful, it is emphasized in this paper that honesty and transparency in regard to the said results and certificates are necessary in ensuring public health and promoting awareness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Keywords** COVID-19, honesty, transparency, truthfulness

Since health care professionals suggested observing physical distancing, lockdowns were imposed by some countries to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. This imposition changed the way people do their daily routine. With this, when there is an easing of quarantine measures different protocols must be maintained if one wants to go back to work or travel. For this reason, a previous correspondence explained that as there is an easing of quarantine measures, there are people who faked COVID-19 diagnostic tests and vaccination certifications, which posed serious concerns for matters of ethics and economics.<sup>1</sup> Thus, these acts of dishonesty by various individuals can affect the mitigation of the virus. With this, we propose that truthfulness must be emphasized among citizens. By being truthful, then, requires being honest and practicing transparency in regard to their COVID-19 test declarations.

Honesty is the quality of being truthful and free from deceit, which is essential in human relations.<sup>2</sup> This quality is important in ensuring public health during the COVID-19 pandemic. As Robert Feldman stated, ‘It’s important, during this pandemic, to be honest, stay at home and to wear a mask, to do social distancing. But I also think there are a lot of subtle pressures that push people to not be totally truthful’.<sup>3</sup> Amid the pandemic, faking and falsifying COVID-19 test certification and information will be detrimental in providing the public with accurate updates and the current status of this infectious disease. The act of manipulating and falsifying of

medical records is a criminal offense that destroys the credibility of the practitioner and the medical diagnostic center. This situation can be avoided if the government will closely monitor all health facilities to strictly follow the protocol in the declaration of COVID-19 test results and the vaccination certification.<sup>4</sup>

Aside from honesty, transparency is another important factor of a reliable diagnosis, testing result and certification. The health care providers must strictly adhere to transparency in their medical practice. Being transparent on matters concerning health, safety and welfare is very important in promoting awareness among people. It provides an avenue for the people to exercise their constitutional rights to know and be informed especially on issues that cause life and death. We cannot deny the fact that the coronavirus pandemic has caused so much distrust among people particularly on the capability of the government in doing nationwide testing, producing reliable and effective vaccines, and educating the public on the efficacy and side effects of the vaccines. These concerns caused fear and distrust, which made people hesitant to be vaccinated.<sup>5</sup>

In conclusion, the coronavirus pandemic created confusion and restlessness among people. The medical malpractices involving unreliable diagnostic testing results and the issuance of falsified vaccination certifications generated questions and doubts among people. The question on truthfulness, honesty and transparency of authentic and precise COVID-19 test results and vaccination certifications can be addressed with

the government's strong political will to have a true, honest and transparent leadership and governance.<sup>6</sup>

## References

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doi: 10.1093/pubmed/fdab098