

# Covid 19, China : 'Wuhan denying virus tests to keep numbers down'

Wednesday 25 March 2020, by [Radio Television Hong Kong \(RTHK\)](#) (Date first published: 23 March 2020).

Despite claims made by mainland authorities that there have been no new local infections of the coronavirus in Wuhan in the last few days, people there have told RTHK this is simply not the case. They say patients are being turned away from hospitals without testing to back the official data, which one person described as a "not medical, but political treatment".

The city which was the epicentre of the Covid-19 outbreak – which has now become a worldwide pandemic – is returning to normal, according to officials there.

Wuhan authorities have already closed the 10 or so temporary hospitals that were set up after regular ones came inundated with patients. The temporary facilities were doing tests on people showing mild symptoms.

Officials say these tests are not needed as the number of new infections has fallen sharply.

But a Wuhan resident, who gave his surname as Wan, disputed this claim. He said that his 70-year-old mother suffered from pneumonia once again after she was discharged from hospital and is now in isolation at a hotel.

He said no hospitals were prepared to admit her because she wasn't tested positive.

He said there is nothing much he can do because he can't leave his home as a lockdown is still in force, and local health authorities only told him to wait.

*"I feel helpless,"* he said.

Other Wuhan residents reported similar experiences.

A member of a volunteer group said his mother, who is in hospital with a heart problem, had seen coronavirus patients being turned away by staff.

Zhang Yi said it is a political need that is making mainland authorities claim there have been no new local infections.

He said he had received messages from officials which showed there were still people coming down with the disease in Wuhan.

*"Whether the official figure is accurate or not, I think you will know. This is a political treatment, not medical treatment,"* he said.

Tens of thousands of people in Wuhan have been infected by the virus since the outbreak began late last year. Official figures show more than 2,500 patients in the city have died from the disease.

A man whose mother died of Covid-19 criticised the government for failing to warn people about the epidemic and for even claiming there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission up until mid January.

Ding Ding said the government is responsible for his mother's death and he plans to file a lawsuit for compensation.

*"Basically our family is the victim, we will ask for compensation,"* he said.

An NGO has also formed a legal team to assist coronavirus patients or their families to file civil claims against the government.

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[https://news.rthk.hk/rthk/en/component/k2/1516240-20200323.htm?fbclid=IwAR0m\\_K\\_K-lZTGcw8n5Y1fCylZXNpIGI4ovm0CR\\_KbyTKNueJ\\_J-xfeJ6Bbg](https://news.rthk.hk/rthk/en/component/k2/1516240-20200323.htm?fbclid=IwAR0m_K_K-lZTGcw8n5Y1fCylZXNpIGI4ovm0CR_KbyTKNueJ_J-xfeJ6Bbg)

A picture sent to RTHK shows people are still queuing up to seek treatment outside a Wuhan hospital.