

Migration

Immigrant Health and Publicity

Oct 6, 2023 (Fri)

Session1: 10:00-12:00

Session2: 13:20-15:30

Organizers: Chonnam National University Center for Global Diaspora Studies, Chonnam National University BK21 Center for International Migration and Diaspora Innovative Talents, Gwangju Workers Health Center, Gwangju Migrant Health Center

Background

As of 2021, there are around two million immigrants and the proportion of them in 71 regions and areas is well over 5% in Korea. Accordingly, discussions on social inclusion of immigrants have been actively going on at local level. In particular, the issues of vulnerable health and inequal access to healthcare of immigrants have emerged at local level during COVID-19 pandemic. In reality, immigrants deemed necessary are welcomed, while those not are subject to exclusion, which makes the current situation worse. As we are prepared for the post Covid era, now is time for us to build a new blueprint based on transitional imagination and practices beyond exclusion and selective inclusion of immigration policies.

The health of immigrants is not an individual matter but a shared issue of local community, which requires social practices considering it a public agenda. In order to address the issue, we have to build solidarity among the local government-market-civic group and to offer a new venue for communication by reflecting the voices of immigrants and local residents.

Objectives

In 2016, Gwangju became the first local government to establish “Ordinance on improving health of foreign residents”. Gwangju has also some private hospitals in Gwangsan District and NGOs (Gwangju Workers Health Center, Gwangju Migrant Health Center, Koryoin Gwangju Medical Center, Immigrant Whole Support Center, and others) engaging in activities of providing free medical services to



immigrants. Thus, during the session, we will have discussion on what they have achieved and what needs to be improved. In so doing, specifically, we will explore theoretical and practical challenges to deal with conflicts and ironies related to the health issue of immigrants revealed during COVID-19 in perspective of 'health publicity'.

Main Agenda

1. To discuss the current status of immigrants' health and medical service demand as residents of local community
2. To discuss the current status and matters to be improved in terms of free medical service for immigrants in Gwangju.
3. To discuss recognition and policies on immigrants' health in Korea already ushered in an era of multi-racial and multi-cultural society.
4. To explore the case of other nations in rules and practices related to the health rights of immigrants and to discuss what Korea could do.

