

# BEIJING'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19



## Beijing utilizes its design expertise for an Online Medical Consultation Platform

Beijing, the sprawling capital of the People's Republic of China, is also a UNESCO Creative City of Design since 2012.

On the strength of its many design colleges and Creative Cluster Areas, Beijing has recognized the design sector as one of its pillar industries, employing around 250,000 people. Each year, the city holds the internationally recognized Beijing Design Week and the Beijing Science and Technology Exposition, amongst many other global outreach events.

To provide effective health services to its inhabitants in response to the current pandemic, the city of Beijing has launched a dedicated Online Medical Consultation Platform for COVID-19, gathering more than 1,000 doctors and 5 hospitals located in the city. While reducing the risk of cross infection caused by in-hospital consultations, the Platform alleviates not only the pressure from public medical resources but also help its citizens deal with anxiety.

Built on the city's expertise in design and innovation, the initiative provides a wide range of medical services to local citizens, ranging from consultations to follow-up visits, or even including the delivery of medicines. The Platform further provides in-depth information on several specific topics, such as infection prevention guidelines, scientific facts and knowledge on coronavirus, as well as mental health caring. Each of these thematic sub-platforms gives access to its citizens to an array of services such as, an epidemic situation map, news broadcast, free psychological consultations, COVID-19 self-test, and all-day individual video consultations, amongst many other services.

By the end of March, up to 25 million people have visited the Platform and over 400,000 persons, from both China and overseas, have received medical consultations through the Platform without leaving home.

Through this initiative, the city of Beijing demonstrates how design and innovation can be utilized to broaden public health services to contain the spread of the virus, meanwhile improving access to urban facilities and raising awareness amongst its citizens.

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