



So far, the virus has claimed over 1,100 lives, and infected over 40,000 people in China | Photo source Zhipeng Ya on Unsplash

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CORONAVIRUS APP WARNS OF PROXIMITY TO THOSE AT RISK

 HEALTH & WELLBEING

Authorities in China have released a “close contact detect” app to help curb the spread of the Coronavirus

Spotted: With the Wuhan-borne Coronavirus spreading mass hysteria across the world, Chinese authorities have responded with a practical means of protection — an app that warns you if you have been in close proximity with a confirmed or suspected patient.

Users can download the “close contact detect” app by scanning a QR code on their phones, using popular apps such as Alipay, WeChat and QQ. Each user has a status, and those people who have been in proximity with the infected — like teachers, office and medical staff, family members, friends, or passengers and crew in shared transport spaces, are given a “close contact” status.

The phone number of each user is registered to their name, contact details and ID number, and every user will be entitled to three status ‘checks’ of the people around them. The hope is that by using the app, not only will users decrease the likelihood of spreading the virus but that the rise panic-spreading could be curbed, as people are faced with real results.

The app is being run by the China Electronics Technology Group Corporation and is bolstered with data from health and transport authorities, through China’s state-run news agency Xinhua.

14th February 2020

Website: xinhuanet.com

Takeaway:

With misinformation about the spreading of the virus and its risks running rife, the app can be used by those wanting a more practical solution to avoiding infection. However, for all its goodwill, it risks the stigmatising of those already infected, or at possible risk. There is a balance to be made with solutions of this sort, in a world where increasing populations and city sizes, alongside strains on medical care provision, makes the risk of health pandemics more likely.