CARPHA SITUATION REPORT NO. 60
JUNE 22, 2020
Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic

Summary
This is an update to the CARPHA Situation Report published on June 18, 2020, in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To date, there are 45,918 cases in 33 countries/territories (including 24 CARPHA Member States), in the Caribbean Region. The risk of further cases occurring in the Caribbean remains Very High. The overarching goal is for all countries to control the pandemic by slowing down the transmission and reducing mortality associated with COVID-19.

CARPHA is leading the regional health response, actively working with CARICOM, Member States and key partners on region-wide approaches to the COVID-19 response. Some Member States have begun a phased lifting of in-country restrictions, some have initiated repatriation of nationals and some have opened their borders to travellers. Active surveillance and continued implementation of COVID-19 prevention measures, especially social distancing, hand hygiene and wearing of masks in public are critical at this time.

New in this Report
- Surveillance and Epidemiology of COVID-19 in 24 Member States
- COVID-19 and Sickle Cell Disease
- Risk Communication – An Integral Component in the Region’s Fight Against COVID-19

SITUATION UPDATE

COVID-19 in the Caribbean
Since the previous report on June 18, 2020, an additional 4,681 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in 14 countries within the Caribbean, bringing the region’s total confirmed cases to 45,918 in 33 countries/territories. This new total represents a 11% increase in the number of confirmed cases. There were 1,120 deaths recorded in the Caribbean region as at June 22, 2020.
Figure 1: Reported Cases of COVID-19 by Region as of June 22, 2020

As of June 22, 2020, there have been 7,429 cases confirmed from CARPHA Member States (CMS), the highest number was reported on May 30, 2020. Figure 2 shows a distribution of the confirmed cases and incidence rate per 100,000 population in CMS to date.

Data in Figure 2 were extracted from published reports by the WHO and CARPHA Member States Ministries of Health Official website. Numbers may vary based on the time the information was extracted. See References.

Figure 2. Confirmed Cases in Member States as of June 22, 2020

As of June 22, 2020, the WHO reported 8,860,331 cases of patients with COVID-19. A total of 216 countries, areas or territories have confirmed at least one case among travellers exposed while abroad and/or person-to-person contact.

Since the last Situation Report on June 18, 2020, no new countries, areas or territories reported their first confirmed case of COVID-19, while 47 reported no new cases. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of cases by WHO Regions.

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Figure 3 shows the 7-day moving average among CMS. The value for each day represents the average number of cases for 7 days calculated using number of confirmed cases for the current day and the six days prior to the current day.

The highest 7-day average was observed on June 5, 2020.
Among cases for whom sex was reported, 56% were female and 44% were male (Figure 4).

For the cases for which data were available, the majority were between 20 and 59 years old, with 50-59 being the modal age group. There was no age reported for the majority of cases (7,101) which are excluded from Figure 5.

Among the 24 Member States, 25% (6/24) have been classified as having sporadic transmission of COVID-19 among cases, 42% (10/24) have reported clusters, 4% (1/24) reported community transmission and 29% (7/24) currently have no cases.

Figure 6 is based on data received by the WHO from national authorities by 10:00 CEST, June 21, 2020.

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Figure 5. Reported confirmed cases of COVID-19 by age group in CMS, n=328

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Laboratory

Since February 10, 2020 and as of June 21, 2020, CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) has received 6,838 samples from 16 CMS, 468 (6.8%) of which have tested positive since the start of the outbreak, 269 results (3.9%) correspond to unique cases.

Figure 7 shows the progression of COVID-19 cases which have been confirmed in CMS from February – June 2020.

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Non-communicable diseases and COVID-19: Sickle Cell Disease and COVID-19


Sickle Cell Disease (or Sickle Cell Anaemia or Sickle Cell Disorder) a non-communicable disease, is a common genetic condition due to a haemoglobin disorder. In CARPHA Member States, Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) prevalence ranges from 1 in 160 births in Grenada to 1 in 382 births in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Jamaica (9.74-9.74%), Grenada (9.56%) and Tobago (9.32%) have the highest frequency of sickle cell trait carriers in the Caribbean Region.

Persons with SCD may be at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness especially if they have underlying cardiopulmonary co-morbidities. It is important that adults and children with SCD prevent getting infected by practicing the COVID-19 healthy hygiene practices, maintaining good physical and mental health and stocking up on essential medications for at least a month. If they have any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 they should contact their health care provider.

CARPHA urges Member States to ensure that interventions are put in place to prevent and manage COVID-19 infection in persons with SCD.

Stakeholder Engagement, Communication and Information

CARPHA is working closely with various stakeholders for a coordinated regional response, and as such has engaged with multiple stakeholders in multiple ways, including the following meetings in which CARPHA participated:

- **June 18, 2020**: CARPHA’s Rapid Response Team members participated in a two-day orientation coordinated by the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to prepare for potential deployment to provide emergency support to Member States during the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season.
- **June 17, 2020**: Dr. St. John gave opening remarks at the CARPHA’s Caribbean Regulatory System (CRS) sub-regional pharmacovigilance webinar on “The Quality and Safety of COVID-19 Treatments in the Caribbean” held in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).
- **June 17, 2020**: The first Disaster Response Survival Training session was held for the CARPHA IMT-ER and CARPHA staff registered on the Rapid Response Team.

CARPHA PRODUCTS

- [Caribbean countries plan to reopen](https://www.carpha.org/What-We-Do/Communicable-Diseases/Caribbean-countries-plan-to-reopen)—June 12, 2020
- [Precautionary prevention measures implemented by Caribbean Countries (outside travel-related measures)](https://www.carpha.org/What-We-Do/Communicable-Diseases/Precautionary-prevention-measures-implemented-by-Caribbean-Countries)—June 12, 2020
- Links to Public Education Resources [https://www.carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus](https://www.carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus)
- Links to Media [https://www.carpha.org/More/Media/Articles](https://www.carpha.org/More/Media/Articles)
- Links to Videos [https://www.youtube.com/user/CARPHACampus](https://www.youtube.com/user/CARPHACampus)

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Risk Communication – An Integral Component in the Region’s Fight Against COVID-19

As the lead agency for the COVID-19 regional health response, and in keeping with CARPHA’s communications mandate to provide accurate, reliable, timely and relevant public health information to its Member States, the critical role of risk communication during this pandemic cannot be overstated.

In light of this, CARPHA’s Communications team is essential in ensuring that Member States are equipped with information/knowledge to prevent, treat and control the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), thereby reducing stakeholders’ fears pre, during and post the outbreak.

In collaboration with the CARPHA Incident Management Team for Emergency Response (IMT-ER), and supported by the Regional Health Communication Network (RHCN), CARPHA Communications has successfully engaged with a wide and diverse target audience, including policy makers, health professionals, health promotion/education personnel, media and the general public.

Technical documents including risk communication strategies and communication products, such as infographics, videos and postcards for public education campaigns, have been and continue to be developed and shared with all Member States. In addition, the Communications team facilitates the provision of timely, up-to-date COVID-19 information via the CARPHA website, which remains a reliable and valuable source of information. This, along with key public health messages are created for dissemination via traditional (print and electronic media) and social media (Facebook, instant messaging), technical reports, as well as face to face and/or virtual meetings have proved critical in the Region’s fight against COVID-19.

Click here for CARPHA’s Communication Strategy for Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19).

WHO and PAHO Highlights

- **COVID-19 has impacted the operation of health services for noncommunicable diseases in the Americas** — June 17, 2020
- **WHO Criteria for releasing COVID-19 patients from isolation** — June 17, 2020
- **WHO welcomes preliminary results about dexamethasone use in treating critically ill COVID-19 patients** — June 16, 2020
- **PAHO Director calls to contain spread of COVID-19 in vulnerable populations in border areas** — June 16, 2020

REFERENCES

https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1&layers=c0b356e20b30490c8b84c7bb9554e7c&layerId=1