CARPHA SITUATION REPORT NO. 78
AUGUST 3, 2020

Summary

This is an update to the CARPHA Situation Report published on July 31, 2020, in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To date, there are 114,941 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. Countries must continue to focus on interrupting viral transmission and reducing mortality associated with COVID-19, even as they continue a phased lifting of in-country restrictions.

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. At this time, some Member States are reporting an increase in positive cases as a result of reopening their borders and continued repatriation of nationals. The processes used for receiving incoming travellers have been guided by protocols developed under the gradual ease of restrictions. In all countries, it remains critical that active surveillance and COVID-19 prevention measures, including physical distancing, hand hygiene and wearing of masks in public are maintained.

New in this Report

- Surveillance and Epidemiology of COVID-19 in 24 Member States
- Regional COVID-19 Public Health Considerations for Reopening of Borders and Resuming Travel in the CARICOM Region

SITUATION UPDATE

COVID-19 in the Caribbean

Since the previous report on July 31, 2020, an additional 6,987 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in 20 countries within the Caribbean, bringing the region’s total confirmed cases to 114,941 in 33 countries/territories. This new total represents a 6% increase in the number of confirmed cases. There were 1,871 deaths recorded in the Caribbean region as at August 3, 2020.
As of August 3, 2020, there have been 12,750 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.

As of August 3, 2020, the WHO reported 17,918,582 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 July 31, 2020, no new countries, areas or territories reported their first confirmed case of COVID-19, while 45 reported no new cases. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of cases by WHO Regions.

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Data in Figure 2 were extracted from published reports by the WHO and CARPHA Member States Ministries of Health Official websites.

Numbers may vary based on the time the information was extracted. See References.
Since February 10, 2020 and as of August 2, 2020, CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) has received 11,231 samples from 16 CMS, 680 (6.1%) of which have tested positive since the start of the outbreak, 442 results (3.9%) correspond to unique cases. Figure 7 shows the progression of COVID-19 cases which have been confirmed in CMS from March – August 2020.

Among the 24 Member States, 38% (9/24) have been classified as having sporadic transmission of COVID-19 among cases, 38% (9/24) have reported clusters, 8% (2/24) reported community transmission and 17% (4/24) currently have no cases.

Figure 6 is based on data received by the WHO from national authorities by 10:00 CEST, August 2, 20201.

Among the cases for which data were available, the majority were between 20 and 59 years, with 40-49 being the modal age group. There was no age reported for the majority of cases (12,176) which are excluded from Figure 5.

Figure 5: Reported Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 by Age Group in CMS, n=574

Figure 6: Categories of Transmission Classification within the Region

For the cases for which data were available, the majority were between 20 and 59 years, with 40-49 being the modal age group.

Among cases for whom sex was reported, 55% were female and 45% were male (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentage of Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 by Sex in CMS, n=1,390

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CARPHA’S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

CARPHA is working closely with various stakeholders for a coordinated regional response. Recent key highlights include:

- **July 31, 2020:** In recognition of World Breastfeeding Week, the Communications department released “World Breastfeeding Week 2020: Support Breastfeeding for a Healthier Planet” which addresses breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic and reminds mothers of the guidelines to follow to protect their babies.

- **July 31, 2020:** Dr. St. John was a guest on the Caribbean Broadcasting Cooperation TV show “Morning Barbados” to give an update on COVID-19. Link to stream available here.

- **July 31, 2020:** Dr. Lisa Indar and Ornella Cyrus presented “Syndromic Surveillance and Tourism Health Information System (THIS)”. Targeted audience were personnel from the Ministry of Health, Health Authority of Anguilla (including IPC/ Surveillance focal point, public health nurses, visiting clinical epidemiologist from Cuba), Prison nurse, environmental health officers and PHE surveillance counterpart. This training was done in collaboration with the Ministry of Health Anguilla and coordinated in collaboration with the Caribbean Public Health Agency.

- **July 30, 2020:** Dr. St John attended the PAHO webinar on Scaling Up COVID-19 testing and the second meeting of the AFD Project Steering Committee.

- **July 30, 2020:** Ms. Ornella Cyrus presented “Tourism Health Information System (THIS)” to six (6) persons from the Ministry of Health St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

- **July 29 and 30, 2020:** Dr. St. John participated in the CDEMA partners meeting on weather systems in the CARICOM region.

- **July 28, 2020:** Ms. Carlon Kirton presented to students at the University of the West Indies, Masters in Health Promotion programme on the services provided by CARPHA and how they contribute to the health and wellbeing of the Region, highlighting the work being done during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **July 28, 2020:** Dr. Boodram, Dr. Fletcher-Lartey, and Mr. Williams participated in a joint multi-hazard simulation exercise with CDEMA, CAN-TO, and CARILEC in preparation for the hurricane season.

- **July 28th 2020.** Dr Indar presented an update on CARPHA’s COVID-19 activities to CDEMA’s Core COVID-19 coordination meeting with CARICOM agencies, UWI and PAHO

- **July 27, 2020:** Dr. St. John, Executive Director, participated in a High-Level Panel Session at the first ever Virtual Security Conference in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) ‘Securing Our Caribbean Community Within The Era Of Covid-19 and Beyond’. The session provided an opportunity to hear from regional security leaders and key supporting partners on the role their organisations are playing in the fight against COVID-19 and the challenges that confront them. Panellists considered various dimensions of the challenges posed to governments, regional organizations and international partners. The virtual conference hosted by the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) runs from July 27 – 31 July 2020.

- **July 26, 2020:** Dr. St. John attended the welcome party led by Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley for the Jack Ma donation of COVID-19 relief supplies to CARICOM. The event was organised by CDEMA which operates the distribution hub for procured relief supplies for COVID-19 for CARICOM.

CARPHA PRODUCTS

- Caribbean Countries that have issued Travel Advisories due to COVID-19 — July 30, 2020
- Caribbean Countries Reopening Plans/Initiatives Post COVID-19—July 30, 2020
- Infographic — Guidance for Cinema Operation during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Links to Public Education Resources https://www.carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus
- Links to Media https://www.carpha.org/More/Media/Articles
The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) as part of its mandate in leading the regional health response to COVID-19, has developed “Health and Border Considerations to Reestablish Travel in the CARICOM Region”. CARPHA recommends that countries adopt a common protocol for re-opening, and work in tandem with the Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security (RCM-HS) to strengthen health security and strategically position the CARICOM Region to successfully exit the COVID-19 lockdown, reopen borders and resume travel.

These guidelines will assist countries in harmonizing their plans to the regional efforts. The associated Infographics in Photo 2 are also available on our website and can be adapted for local use.

Photo 2: Infographic: Public Health Considerations for Re-opening of Borders and Resuming Travel in the CARICOM Region. (Click on image to enlarge)