CARPHA SITUATION REPORT NO. 79
AUGUST 5, 2020

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic

Summary

This is an update to the CARPHA Situation Report published on August 3, 2020, in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To date, there are 118,486 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 easing 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
- CariPHLN Secretariat distributed CariPHLN Bulletin #5

Since the previous report on August 3, 2020, an additional 3,545 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in 18 countries within the Caribbean, bringing the region’s total confirmed cases to 118,486 in 33 countries/territories. This new total represents a 3% increase in the number of confirmed cases. There were 1,918 deaths recorded in the Caribbean region as at August 5, 2020.
As of August 5, 2020, the WHO reported 18,354,342 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 August 3, 2020, no new countries, areas or territories reported their first confirmed case of COVID-19, while 35 reported no new cases. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of cases by WHO Regions.

As of August 5, 2020, there have been 13,102 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 websites

Numbers may vary based on the time the information was extracted. See References

Figure 1: Reported Cases of COVID-19 by Region as of August 5, 2020*

* Excluded from the chart are 741 cases from international conveyance

\[ \text{Active cases} = \text{Total cases} - (\text{Number of cases recovered} + \text{Number of deaths}) \]
Among cases for whom sex was reported, 54% were female and 46% were male (Figure 4).

For 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 (12,528) which are excluded from Figure 5.

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 4, 2020¹.

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Laboratory

Since February 10, 2020 and as of August 4, 2020, CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) has reported 457 positive unique cases of COVID-19 from CARPHA Member States (CMS).

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

CARPHA’S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Laboratory

- August 4, 2020: The CariPHLN Secretariat distributed CariPHLN Bulletin #5 which now has a new look! This issue includes details of the first COVID-19 PCR test kit authorised for pandemic use by the CARPHA CRS, the Global Health Security Agenda Action Package Prevent-3 (GHSA APP3) biosafety and biosecurity statement on the current COVID-19 pandemic and preparing for future health emergencies, the updated laboratory guidance from PAHO/WHO and links to useful training tools, webinars and online courses. Click here to read the full bulletin.

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

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

- August 5, 2020: Dr. St. John participated in a webinar “Accelerating Access to COVID-19 Tools in Latin America and the Caribbean (LATAC)”, co-hosted by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Mexico. The webinar aimed to promote international and regional cooperation as the only solution to tackling the pandemic, providing a platform to discuss a multilateral approach to securing Vaccines, Therapeutics and Diagnostics (VTD); share approaches and raise awareness of VTD landscape, building understanding of areas of common cause amongst LATAC countries and convene COVAX partners (WHO, Gavi and CEPI) and multilat eral development banks to build LATAC understanding of pooled financing approaches and opportunities for vaccines.

- August 1, 2020: Dr. Glennis Andall-Brereton, Senior Technical Officer for Non-Communicable Diseases at CARPHA has been published in the August 2020 issue of the Lancet Oncology: “Cancer Care in the Commonwealth Caribbean in COVID times” commentary. The full text can be found in Volume 21, Issue 8, August 01, 2020 and is available here.

- July 31, 2020: In recognition of World Breastfeeding Week, the Chronic Disease and Injury Department in collaboration with 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.

CARPHA PRODUCTS

- Infographic—Reducing the Risk of COVID-19 while Voting
- Interim Guidance for Retail Sectors during the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Caribbean—July 31, 2020
- Infographic—Guidance for Retail Sector during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 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
- 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
- Links to Videos https://www.youtube.com/user/CARPHACampus
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 3 are also available on our website and can be adapted for local use.

**REFERENCES**