Summary

This is an update to the CARPHA Situation Report published on September 1, 2020, in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To date, there are 172,601 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.

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. Some countries are now reporting clusters and community transmission. In all countries, it remains critical that active surveillance and COVID-19 prevention measures, including physical distancing, hand hygiene, wearing of masks in public of crowds are maintained.

New in this Report
• Surveillance and Epidemiology of COVID-19 in 24 Member States
• CARPHA COVID-19 Health Rounds Education and Training Series

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE*

Globally
25,843,259 cases (515,824 new)
Caribbean Region
33 countries, areas, or territories
172,601 cases (3,484 new)
97,120 recovered (2,277 new)
2,915 deaths (99 new)
Rest of the World
182 countries, areas, or territories and international conveyances
25,670,658 cases (512,340 new)
17,264,770 recovered (471,135 new)
855,720 deaths (10,270 new)

* Figures reported by WHO supplemented with

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

COVID-19 in the Caribbean

Since the previous report on September 1, 2020, an additional 3,484 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in 22 countries within the Caribbean, bringing the region’s total confirmed cases to 172,601 in 33 countries/territories. This new total represents a 2% increase in the number of confirmed cases. There were 2,915 deaths recorded in the Caribbean Region as at September 3, 2020.
As of September 3, 2020, the WHO reported 25,842,652 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 September 1, 2020, no new countries, areas or territories reported their first confirmed case of COVID-19, while 44 reported no new cases. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of cases by WHO Regions.

Figure 2 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 September 1, 2020.
Among cases in CMS for whom sex was reported, 55% were female and 45% were male as of September 3, 2020 (Figure 4).

For the cases for which data were available, the majority were between 20 and 59 years, with 30-39 being the modal age group. There was no age reported for the majority of cases (25,636) which are excluded from Figure 5, as of September 3, 2020.

Among the 24 Member States, 29% (7/24) have been classified as having sporadic transmission of COVID-19 among cases, 33% (8/24) have reported clusters, 25% (6/24) reported community transmission and 13% (3/24) currently have no cases as of September 3, 2020 (Figure 6).

Figure 6 is based on data reported on the WHO Dashboard. See references.

Laboratory

Between February 10, 2020 and September 2, 2020, CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) received 19,259 samples from 17 CMS, 1,653 (8.6%) of which have tested positive since the start of the outbreak and 1,146 results (6.0%) correspond to unique cases.

Figure 7 shows the progression of COVID-19 cases which have been confirmed in CMS from March – August 2020.
CARPHA COVID-19 Health Rounds Education and Training Series

The Caribbean Public Health Agency has developed an educational and capacity building webinar series titled “CARPHA COVID-19 Health Rounds”. The objectives are to (i) provide technical guidance to support public health policy and clinical decision-making affecting prevention, diagnosis, spread, treatment, clinical trials, medical product use and safety in response to the pandemic and (ii) provide health guidelines for safe re-opening of hospitality and other sectors during the pandemic (iii) provide guidance for addressing other public health emergencies / threats in the Caribbean during the pandemic (e.g. Dengue, hurricanes).

Target participants will vary according to the webinar, but will include: health administrators, emergency response teams, epidemiologists, environmental health officers, regulators, laboratory personnel, health care workers, disaster coordinators, hospitality and other sectors. Webinars will be presented weekly by CARPHA from September to December 2020, in collaboration with key regional partners.

The series was launched today, September 2 with “COVID-19 Health Guidelines for Reopening Hospitality Sector”. This training was held in partnership with the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) and delivered by Dr. Lisa Indar, Assistant Director, Surveillance, Disease Prevention and Control Division and Ms. Ornella Cyrus, Epidemiologist, CARPHA’s Tourism and Health Programme. A total of 256 persons from varying backgrounds in the tourism industry across the region were trained. Certificates of participation will be provided.

The Next Webinar: The next webinar in the series will be on “Management of Evacuation Shelters During the COVID-19 Pandemic” and will take place on September 10. Persons involved in the planning and management of emergency shelters should attend, including community shelter managers, municipal disaster managers, planners, environmental health officers, local disaster coordinators, and other public health managers. Registration is via CARPHA’s website.

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

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

- **September 2, 2020**: Dr. St. John participated in the following:
  - WHO Solidarity Clinical Trial Steering Committee.
  - Debriefing meeting with CARPHA Communications team on a special Facebook cam-

CARPHA PRODUCTS

REGIONAL COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS FOR REOPENING OF BORDERS AND RESUMING TRAVEL IN THE CARICOM REGION

CARPHA, as part of its mandate in leading the regional health response to COVID-19, has developed a suite of “Health Considerations” to successfully exit the COVID-19 lockdown, reopen borders and resume travel. As of June 2020, CARICOM countries started a phased re-opening of their borders and businesses and as expected, have experienced an increase in imported COVID-19 cases. Reopening and recovery require a careful balance between reducing restrictive measures and ensuring adequate measures are implemented to reduce importation and spread of new cases; and to ensure that capacity is ramped up to rapidly identify, test, isolate and trace contacts of new cases. In the absence of a vaccine, COVID-19 will continue to be a grave public health, security, and economic threat. The full document can be accessed [here](#) and [infographics here](#).

- **Caribbean Countries that have issued Travel Advisories due to COVID-19**—August 28, 2020.
- **In-Home Repair and Field Services in the Caribbean during the COVID-19 Pandemic—Interim Guidance**—August 26, 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)
CARPHA Health Information Unit: Building Capacity for Reliable Health Information During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Health Information Unit is part of the Health Information, Communicable Diseases and Emergency Response Department. The Unit manages data submitted by Member States as part of the general surveillance of syndromes, communicable diseases and mortality in CMS. The Unit builds capacity within Member States in the area of data quality, medical death certification and mortality coding.

COVID-19 Death Certification

Reliable knowledge on the mortality and causes of death in a population are key to guiding public health decisions. The primary source of mortality data is from the cause of death section on the medical certificate of death (MCOD). It is this data researchers will be keenly reviewing to gain a better understanding of the morbid events surrounding COVID-19 deaths in our communities.

Given the novelty of COVID-19, WHO issued guidance on the recording and coding of COVID-19 deaths. CARPHA has been building Member State’s capacity to use these guidelines through participation in webinars; the first of which was held collaboratively with PAHO, with over 100 attendees from CMS, and answering specific queries on complicated COVID-19 deaths.

COVID-19 Summary Data Collection

To present a comprehensive epidemiologic profile of COVID-19 in CMS, CARPHA routinely collects and analyses surveillance information on COVID-19 from Member States through several sources including:

- Weekly Syndromic Surveillance and COVID-19 Reporting Form
- COVID-19 clinical line listings
- Official country websites

This data is presented at different fora such as webinars, regional meetings and Pandemic Situation Reports.

The Health Information Unit also ensures that routine surveillance for other reportable illnesses and technical support for health information systems continues, as part of the non-COVID-19 essential services provided to Member States.

REFERENCES

https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1&layers=c0b356e20b30490c8b8b4c7bb9554e7c&layerId=1