Summary
This is an update to the CARPHA Situation Report published on September 14, 2020, in relation to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

To date, there are 197,351 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 or crowded areas are maintained.

New in this Report
Surveillance and Epidemiology of COVID-19 in 24 Member States
Third webinar in the Health Rounds Series—Mosquito Borne Disease Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Globally</th>
<th>Caribbean Region</th>
<th>Rest of the World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed cases</td>
<td>29,737,785 cases (818,420 new)</td>
<td>197,351 cases (5,028 new)</td>
<td>29,540,434 cases (813,392 new)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovered cases</td>
<td>937,392 deaths</td>
<td>112,914 recovered (2,664 new)</td>
<td>20,279,609 recovered (687,333 new)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>5,011,212 confirmed cases 227,971 deaths</td>
<td>3,457 deaths (97 new)</td>
<td>933,935 deaths (15,038 new)</td>
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* Figures reported by WHO supplemented with additional data from local country reports.

SITUATION UPDATE

COVID-19 in the Caribbean
Since the previous report on September 14, 2020, an additional 5,028 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in 24 countries within the Caribbean, bringing the region’s total confirmed cases to 197,351 in 33 countries/territories. This new total represents a 3% increase in the number of confirmed cases. There were 3,457 deaths recorded in the Caribbean Region as at September 17, 2020.
As of September 17, 2020, there have been 32,942 cases confirmed from CARPHA Member States (CMS); the highest number was reported on September 9, 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.

As of September 17, 2020, the WHO reported 29,737,453 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 14, 2020, no new countries, areas or territories reported their first confirmed case of COVID-19, while 27 reported no new cases. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of cases by WHO Regions.

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Among cases in CMS for whom sex was reported, 55% were female and 45% were male as of September 17, 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 (32,323) which are excluded from Figure 5, as of September 17, 2020.

Among the 24 Member States, 21% (5/24) have been classified as having sporadic transmission of COVID-19 among cases, 29% (7/24) have reported clusters, 33% (8/24) reported community transmission and 17% (4/24) currently have no cases as of September 17, 2020 (Figure 6).

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

Laboratory

Between February 10, 2020 and September 16, 2020, CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) received 22,787 samples from 17 CMS, 2,528 (11.1%) of which have tested positive since the start of the outbreak and 1,787 results (7.8%) correspond to unique cases.

Figure 7 shows the progression of COVID-19 cases which have been confirmed in CMS from March – September 2020.
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; (ii) provide health guidelines for safe re-opening of hospitality and other sectors during the pandemic; and (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.

Third in the CARPHA COVID-19 Health Rounds Webinar Series was “Mosquito Borne Disease Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic.” The webinar was well received by over 230 participants from 24 countries, 18 of which were CARPHA Member States. Participants included Ministry of Health workers from various departments including environmental health, public health, vector control, national laboratories, as well as, universities, NGOs and the private sector. Certificates of participation will be provided for individuals who attended the session. The recording of the webinar will be available at CARPHA.org.

The next webinar: The next webinar in the series will be on COVID-19: Laboratory Diagnostics and Patient Immunity and will take place on September 29, 2020 at 11:00 AM EST. The webinar will provide current information on available laboratory diagnostic options and what is known about patient immunity to SARS-COV-2. Registration is now available from CARPHA’s website via this link.

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

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

- **September 16, 2020:** Dr. St. John participated in a steering committee for the Caribbean arm of the WHO Solidarity Clinical Trial.
- **September 16, 2020:** Dr. Lisa Indar was a panelist on the Caribbean Tourism Organization’s live online discussion on COVID-19: Forward looking. The discussion examined the Caribbean situation, six months after shutting international borders due to COVID-19, with reopening of some countries and progression of Caribbean tourism during this period.
- **September 15 and 16, 2020:** Dr. St. John interviewed with the Consultants developing the CARICOM Strategic Plan with emphasis on the Effects of COVID-19 on the region.
- **September 11, 2020:** Dr. St. John and Dr. Indar participated in a CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting.
- **September 10, 2020:** CARPHA held the second webinar in its COVID-19 Health Rounds “Managing Evacuation Shelters During the COVID-19 Pandemic”. The objective was to discuss strategies and practical steps to take when preparing and managing emergency shelters amid COVID-19.

CARPHA PRODUCTS

- **Caribbean Countries that have issued Travel Advisories due to COVID-19**—September 10, 2020.
- **Infographic—Indoor Recreational Activities: Reducing the Risk**

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)
**Programme Coordination Unit Coordinating CARPHA’s external funding for the COVID-19 Response**

CARPHA’s Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) coordinates the implementation of a portfolio of International Development Partners (IDPs) - funded projects and helps to improve the level and quality of project management in the Agency. As of August 31, 2020, CARPHA was serving as the Executing Agency for about nineteen (19) projects financed by thirteen (13) IDPs. These IDP-funded projects represent the nerve-centre of the Agency’s annual activities and as such, the strengthening of partnerships with these and other emerging IDPs; and the effective implementation of the projects which they finance, are critical to the Agency’s success.

The PCU is currently staffed by Mr. Akhenaton St. Hillaire - Programme Coordinator; Ms. Sharon King - Project Officer (OECS Regional Health Project); Ms. Abby Eligon - Project Officer (AFD Project); Ms. Maria Garcia-Joseph - Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer; and Mr. Romario Edwards - Programme Coordination Assistant. The PCU has continued to play a critical role in supporting the national and regional response to COVID-19 in the Caribbean region, including mobilising IDP-funded activities, participation in CARPHA’s Incident Management Team (IMT) for Emergency Response (ER) and leading a small group to measure the application/use of CARPHA’s Situation Reports and Technical Guidance Documents. The PCU Team is coordinating various project activities (more details available here) aimed at bolstering the regional COVID-19 response, including:

11th European Development Fund Programme of Support for Health Security Strengthening for Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease Outbreaks in the Caribbean (€ 8,000,000.00): for procurement of vaccines and/or other treatment for COVID-19; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); and laboratory equipment for CARPHA’s and Member States for COVID-19 and other Diseases;

US CDC COVID-19 Project (US$475,000.00): for experts to strengthen surveillance systems; deployment of Rapid Response Teams (RRTs); and procurement of laboratory supplies for diagnostic testing for COVID-19 at CARPHA Laboratory.

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Regional Health Project (World Bank – funded) to fast track items to support response to COVID-19 valued at US$660,984.00)

The Agence Française de Développement (AFD), also supports the Regional Coordinating Mechanism on Health Security, chaired by CARPHA, that is coordinating the regional COVID-19 response; procurement of laboratory equipment and PPE to support COVID-19 testing services.

**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. 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.

**REFERENCES**

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