As of June 25 2020, CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) has received **7,555 samples** from 16 CMS, 518 (6.9%) of which have tested positive since the start of the outbreak.

**TRENDING AT CARPHA**

**World Sickle Cell Day - June 19, 2020**

Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a common genetic condition due to a haemoglobin disorder. Haemoglobin is a protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout our bodies. Persons with SCD may be at **higher risk** for severe COVID-19 illness especially if they have underlying heart and lung health problems.

**Risk Communication in the Region’s Fight Against COVID-19**

CARPHA’s Communications Unit is essential in ensuring that Member States are equipped with information/knowledge to prevent, treat and control the Coronavirus Disease, thereby reducing fears pre-, during and post-outbreak. The CARPHA Communications Unit has successfully engaged with a wide and diverse target audience, including policy makers, health professionals, health promotion/education personnel, media and the general public. Keep updated via CARPHA’s [website](#) and social media platforms.
**IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS**

**Imported Cases**
- Exposed to COVID-19 abroad
- Developed symptoms in home country
- Tested positive for COVID-19

E.g. Husband returning from a conference abroad

**Local Spread/ Secondary Cases**
- No travel history
- Exposed to imported case
- Developed symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19
- Able to identify source of, or link to infection

E.g. Wife of the man who attended the conference abroad

**Community Spread**
- Persons in the community developed symptoms and tested positive
- No travel history or contact with an imported case or confirmed COVID-19 case
- Source of, or link to infection is unknown

**TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19**

1. Transfers from person to person via tiny droplets from the nose or mouth
2. Spreads when a person with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes
3. Also spreads via contact

also spreads via contact

Touching surfaces, such as desks and door handles where the tiny droplets from an infected person have fallen

**CLINICAL PRESENTATION**

*Based on patients in the United States of America

**Most Common:**

- Fever (temperature > 37.5 °C)
- Shortness of breath
- Cough (both dry and productive)
- Muscle pain
- Fatigue

**Atypical:**

- Older adults and persons with medical conditions may have delayed presentation of fever and respiratory symptoms.

**Diarrhoea and nausea may be experienced before developing fever and other symptoms.**

**Loss of smell and an altered sense of taste have been reported.**

**Illness Severity**

**MILD to MODERATE:**
Patients present with mild symptoms up to mild pneumonia.

**SEVERE:**
Patients have severe difficulty breathing, low oxygen levels and >50% lung involvement on imaging.

**CRITICAL:**
Patients can have respiratory failure, shock and multi-organ system dysfunction.

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Mild to Moderate (81%)
Severe (14%)
Critical (5%)
PREVENTION OF DISEASE

Social Distancing

Social Distancing can **stop or slow down** the spread of a disease in the community. It requires limiting the time we spend with persons outside of our close family and/or house mates. It means putting **more space** between persons to decrease the chance of spread and thus, infection.

**Other Precautionary Measures**

- **Wash your hands often and carefully with soap and water or clean with an alcohol-based hand rub.**
- **Cough or sneeze into your elbow or sleeve if tissue is not available.**
- **Practice social distancing. Avoid contact with anyone who is coughing or sneezing.**
- **Wear face masks when applicable, e.g. when visiting the grocery or market.**
- **If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical early and share previous travel history.**
- **If you develop symptoms, stay home. Avoid public transport and public spaces. Seek medical care.**

EXPLAINING COVID-19 TO CHILDREN

COVID-19 has affected everyone, including children. Adequate time should be spent discussing this disease with the children in your household. Some tips when explaining COVID-19 with children include:

1. **Remain calm and reassure them that they are safe.**
2. **Make time to talk and listen to their concerns. Try to answer truthfully and age appropriately.**
3. **Teach them actions to include in their daily routine to stay safe.**

Storytelling is also an option when explaining COVID-19 to children. The excerpt below is from Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings entitled "My Hero is You: How Kids Can Fight COVID-19!"

"What does COVID-19 look like?" Sara asked her mum. "COVID-19, or the coronavirus, is so tiny we can’t see it," said her mum. "But it spreads in the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick, and when they touch people or things around them. People who are sick get a fever and a cough and can have some trouble breathing."

For more information of CARPHA’s activities and guidelines on COVID-19, please access Situation Report 62 - June 26 2020 by clicking here.
REFERENCES