

## Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic

### CARPHA Situation Report No. 36 - April 22, 2020

#### Summary

This is an update to the Situation Report published on April 20, 2020, in relation to the outbreak of COVID-19.

To date, there are 9,098 cases in 33 countries/territories (including 24 CARPHA Member States), in the Caribbean Region. The risk of further importation of cases to the rest of the Caribbean remains **Very High**.

The Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security (RCM-HS), is actively working with Heads of Government and regional partners on a collective approach to the COVID-19 response.

*Countries are strongly urged to strengthen their health sector response and move to a state of readiness and rapid response.*

#### NEW in this report

- **Surveillance and Epidemiology in 24 Member States**

#### Numbers at a Glance\*

*Clinically diagnosed and laboratory confirmed cases*

##### Globally

2,471,163 cases (185,917 new)

##### In the Caribbean Region

33 countries, areas, or territories (0 new)  
9,098 cases (627 new)  
1,301 recovered (200 new)  
444 deaths (31 new)

##### Rest of the World

179 countries, areas, or territories and Other\*\* (0 new)  
2,462,065 cases (185,290 new)  
694,023 recovered (59,813 new)  
168,562 deaths (13,851 new)

\*\*Persons on board the Diamond Princess Cruise Ship harboured in Yokohama, Japan

#### WHO Risk Assessment

China	Very High
Globally	Very High
Caribbean	Very High

\*CARPHA is providing updated reports on cases in CARPHA Member States as information becomes available through local sources. Caribbean numbers presented in this report may not necessarily be reflected in the WHO totals.

#### Situation Update

Up to 33 countries in the Caribbean region have reported the importation of at least one confirmed case of COVID-19. The risk of further importation of cases to the Caribbean Region remains **Very High**.

The aim for all countries now, is to **stop transmission, prevent the spread of the virus and save lives**. Based on the Draft CARPHA Health Sector Response Guidelines for COVID-19 circulated to Member States, most countries are encouraged to implement actions in keeping with the Initial or Targeted Action in the Response Phase.

## Overview of COVID-19 Cases

### COVID-19 in the Caribbean

*Since the previous report on April 20, 2020, no new countries reported their first confirmed case of COVID-19 within the Caribbean region. Additional cases, however, were confirmed in 14 countries, bringing the region's total confirmed cases to 8,471 in 33 countries/territories; 24 (72%) of these are CARPHA Member States. This new total represents a 7% increase in the numbers of confirmed cases. Thirty-one (31) additional deaths were also recorded, bringing the total numbers of deaths to 444.*

### COVID-19 Globally

The data contained in Table 1 below are obtained from data reported by the WHO, supplemented by other sources – (Reference 1 and 2 in Table 1).

As of April 22, 2020, the WHO reported 2,471,136 cases of patients with COVID-19. Outside of China, 212 countries, areas or territories have confirmed at least one case among travellers exposed while abroad and/or person-to-person contact. No new countries have reported their first confirmed case of COVID-19 since the last Situation Report on April 20, 2020. See Table 2 below for more details on cases, deaths and recoveries. The number of cases recovered since our last report was not available.

*Note. Cases reported between February 13-19, 2020 include both laboratory-confirmed and clinically diagnosed cases for the Hubei province. All other dates shown only include laboratory-confirmed cases.*

**Table 1: Countries or Territories with reported cases of COVID-19, April 22, 2020**

Region	Country/Territory	Cases	# new cases since last report	Deaths	Recovered	% of cases still active <sup>‡</sup>
<b>Region of the Americas</b>						
<b>Caribbean</b>	Dominican Republic	5,044	364	245	463	86.0
	Puerto Rico	1,298	85	64	0	95.1
	Rest of the Caribbean*	1,281	85	71	383	64.6
	Cuba	1,137	102	38	309	69.5
	Martinique	163	0	14	73	46.6
	Guadeloupe	148	0	12	73	42.6
<b>Americas</b>	Rest of the Region**	916,220	66,024	44,331	131,677	80.8
<b>Other Regions</b>	Western Pacific Region**	136,271	3,833	5,793	98,347	23.6
	European Region**	1,219,486	97,297	109,952	376,904	60.1
	South-East Asia Region**	33,912	5,937	1427	7,470	73.8
	Eastern Mediterranean Region**	139,349	10,844	6,326	73,752	42.5
	African Region**	16,115	1,355	720	5,229	63.1

Region	Country/Territory	Cases	# new cases since last report	Deaths	Recovered	% of cases still active <sup>‡</sup>
Other	International conveyance (Diamond Princess Cruise Ship)	712	0	13	644	7.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,471,136</b>	<b>185,926</b>	<b>169,006</b>	<b>695,324</b>	<b>65.0</b>

<sup>‡</sup> Active cases = Total cases – (Number of cases recovered + Number of deaths)

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> For full details on all countries' data visit Sources listed below. Numbers are updated throughout the day and may vary from what is listed at time of publishing.

Sources: (1) WHO Situation Dashboard Accessed at 8:25am 22 April 2020. Available from: <https://who.sprinklr.com/>

(2) Johns Hopkins University's Centre for Science and Engineering Accessed at 8:25am. 22 April 2020. Available from:

<https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

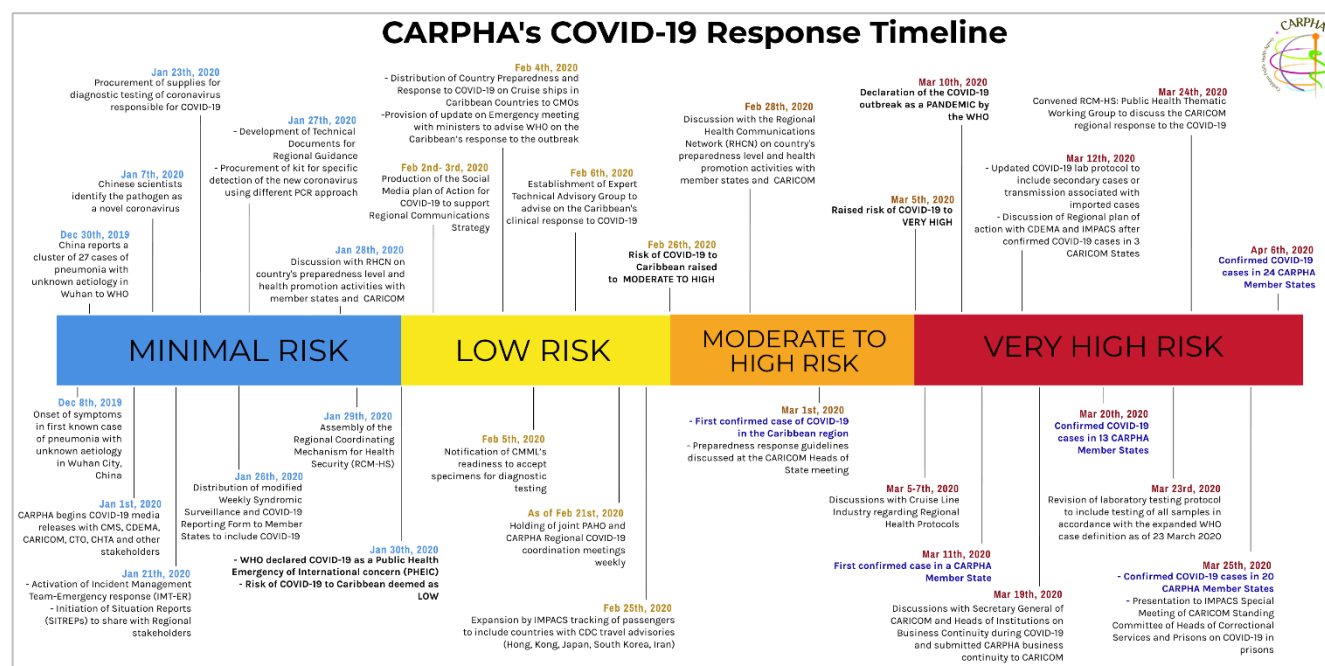
<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1&layers=c0b356e20b30490c8b8b4c7bb9554e7c&layerId=1>

N.B. The WHO notes that due to a retrospective data consolidation exercise, some numbers may not reflect the exact difference between the previous numbers reported and the numbers reported today.

## Caribbean Regional Coordination

CARPHA is leading the regional health response to COVID-19, in keeping with its Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) mandate from CARICOM and recommendations from the COHSOD-Health Working Group on Regional Coordination for Response Management. As such, CARPHA activated its Incident Management Team-Emergency Response (IMT-ER) on January 21, 2020 and convened the Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security (RCM-HS). Figure 1 depicts a timeline of regional events since the outbreak was detected in December 2019. CARPHA continues to work with its partners and countries, on a harmonized regional response.

**Figure 1: CARPHA COVID-19 Response Timeline (December 2019 – April 2020)**



## Caribbean Public Health Agency Response

### CARPHA's Mission

CARPHA's aim is to work with regional and international health partners to respond to this public health threat and provide timely advice and assistance to Member States and stakeholders.

### Governance

CARPHA's Incident Management Team – Emergency Response (IMT-ER) is leading the health response in keeping with CARPHA's mandate from the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The IMT-ER produces Situation Reports three times weekly. As of March 31, 2020, CARPHA's IMT-ER meets three times weekly to discuss CARPHA's COVID-19 response and schedules are adjusted and guided by COVID-19 Incident Action Plan.

CARPHA's IMT-ER in their meeting on April 9, 2020, provided the following updates:

- CARPHA's Rapid Response Teams have been assembled and a roster is being developed for additional surge capacity for deployment to support Member States.
- CARPHA Workplace Protocol has been updated to reflect the commencement of temperature checks on all three campuses and staff have been provided with PPE.



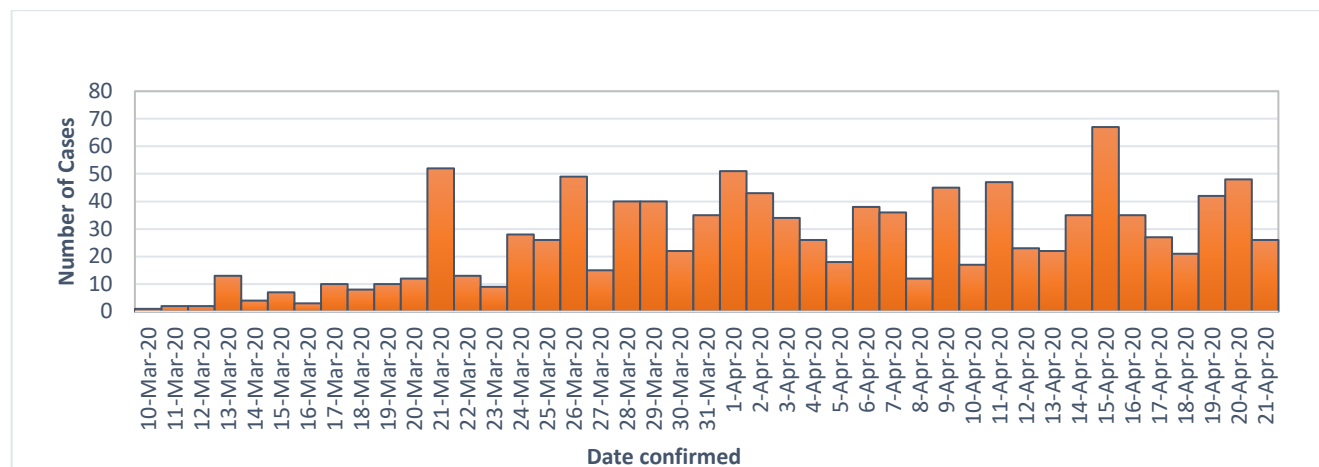
**Picture 1:** On CARPHA's St. Lucia Campus, Lab Manager Kareem Charlemagne checks staff members' temperature before entry into the office.

### Surveillance and Epidemiology in 24 Member States

Data submitted officially by Member States to CARPHA Surveillance System, official media releases from Ministry of Health or other official Country sources available in the public domain, have been used to inform the assessment of the current situation in the Caribbean Region.

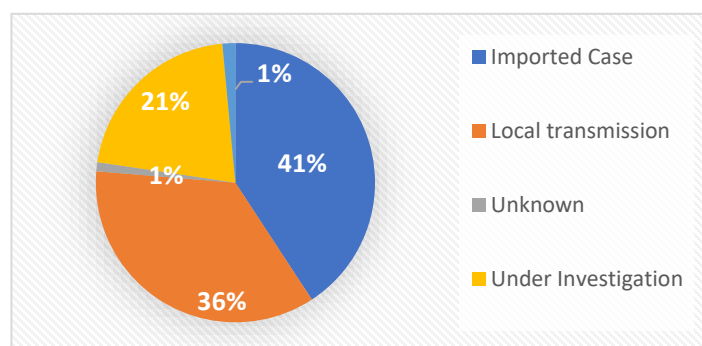
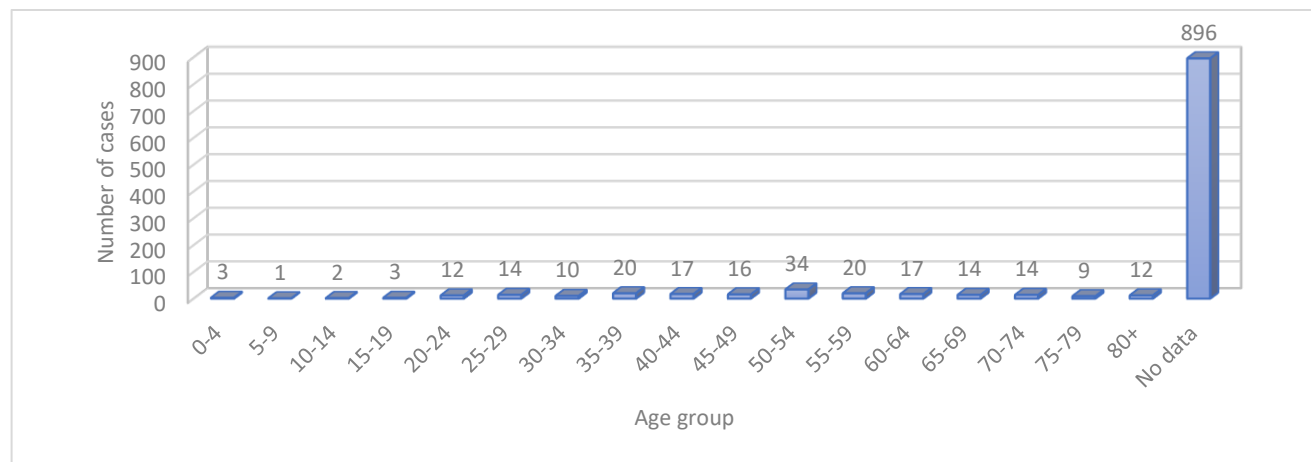
As of April 20, 2020, there have been 1,114 cases confirmed from CMS, the majority reported on April 15, 2020 (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Daily count of confirmed cases - CARPHA Member States**



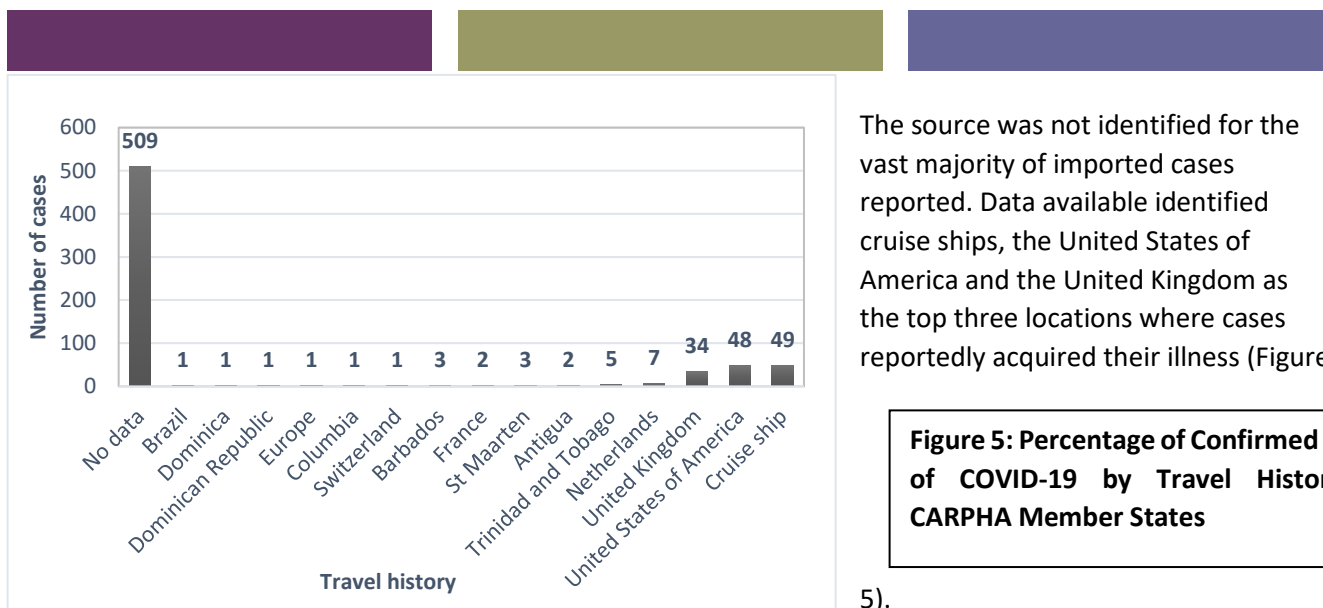
For the cases for which data was available, the majority were aged 50 years and over. There was no age provided for most cases (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Reported Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 by age group in CARPHA Member States**



Among cases for whom a source of infection was reported, 41% were imported; and 36% appeared to be close contacts (local transmission) of a known imported case (Figure 4).

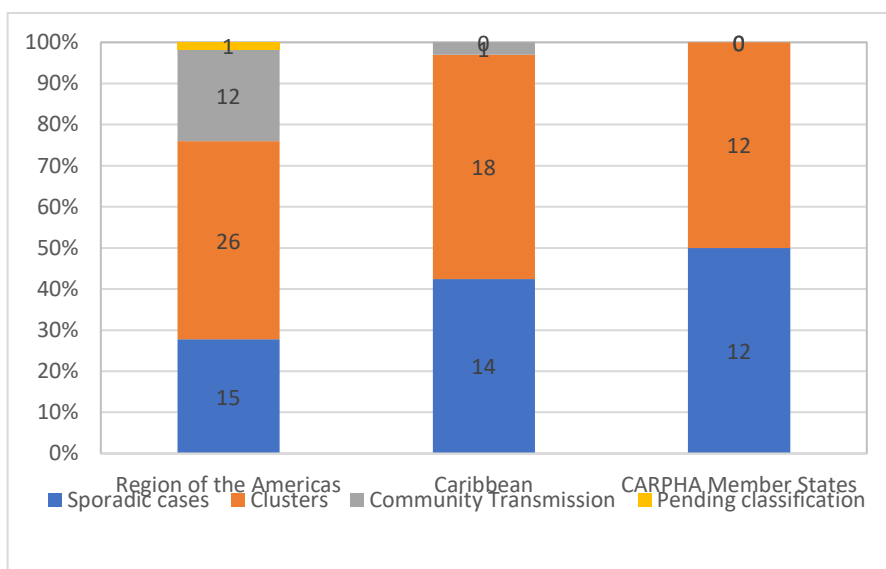
**Figure 4: Percentage of Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 by Transmission Category in**



The source was not identified for the vast majority of imported cases reported. Data available identified cruise ships, the United States of America and the United Kingdom as the top three locations where cases reportedly acquired their illness (Figure

**Figure 5: Percentage of Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 by Travel History in CARPHA Member States**

5).



Among the 24 Member States, 50% (12/24) have been classified as having sporadic cases, 50% (12/24) have reported clusters, based on data received by WHO from national authorities by 10:00 CEST, April 21, 2020.<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 6: Category of Countries by Transmission Classification**

**Sporadic cases:** Countries/territories/areas with one or more cases, imported or locally detected.

**Clusters of cases:** Countries/territories/areas experiencing cases, clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures.

**Community transmission:** Countries/area/territories experiencing larger outbreaks of local transmission defined through an assessment of factors including, but not limited to:

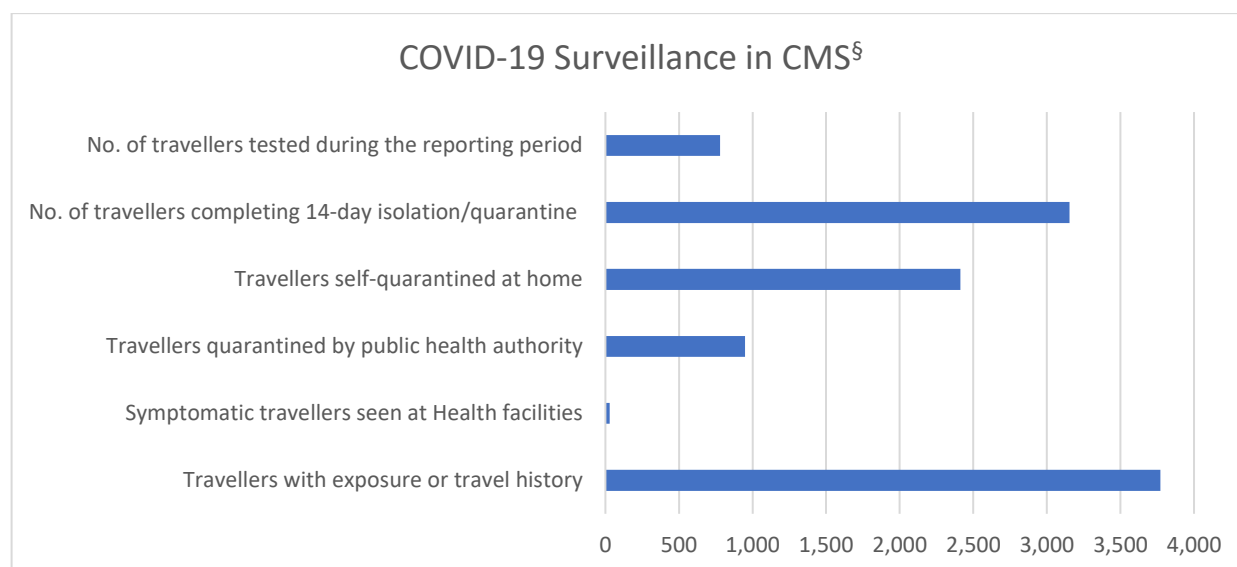
- Large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains
- Large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance
- Multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the country/territory/area

<sup>1</sup> WHO (2020). Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report – 92 [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200421-sitrep-92-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=38e6b06d\\_6](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200421-sitrep-92-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=38e6b06d_6) accessed 22 April 2020.

## COVID-19 Line listing and Syndromic surveillance data

- CARPHA has a mandate to carry out surveillance of infectious diseases in the Region. Since the start of the outbreak, few countries have submitted their line listings for COVID-19 cases. Member States are reminded to **send anonymous line listings of confirmed cases of COVID-19 to CARPHA weekly**, by emailing [carpha-epidemiology@carpha.org](mailto:carpha-epidemiology@carpha.org).
- CARPHA has produced various technical guidelines including algorithms to assist CARPHA Member States (CMS) to triage and manage suspected cases within their borders and in clinical settings. These are summarised at the end of this document and can be accessed from CARPHA website at <http://carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus>.

A summary of COVID-19 surveillance data received from Member States is presented in Figure 6<sup>§</sup>.



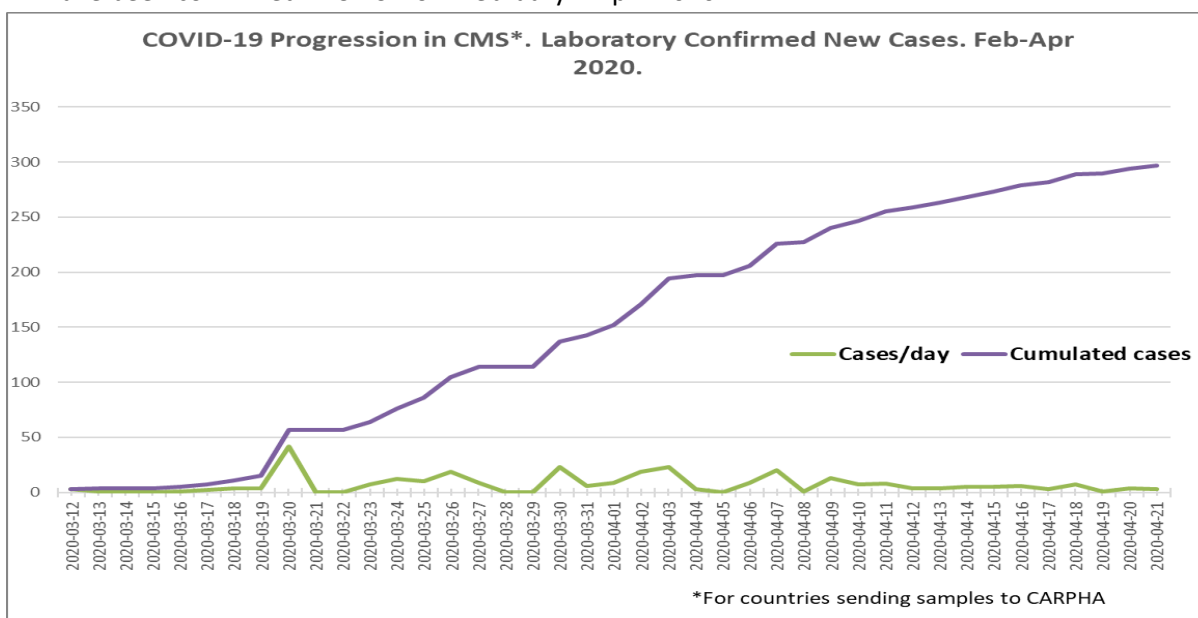
**Figure 7: CARPHA Surveillance received from Member States, as of April 20, 2020**

<sup>§</sup> To date five Member States reported data for EPI-Week 15. \* Not reported. No. refers to the number of persons reported in EW-X; Cum. refers to the number of persons to date, i.e. EW 1-X.



## Laboratory

- As of April 21, 2020, CARPHA has received 2,414 samples from 14 CMS, 314 (13.00%) of which have tested positive since the start of the outbreak. Figure 7 shows the progression of COVID-19 cases which have been confirmed in CMS from February – April 2020.



**Figure 8: COVID-19 Progression in CMS. Laboratory Confirmed Cases, February – April 2020**

- On April 16, 2020, CARPHA through the Caribbean Public Health Laboratory Network (CariPHLN), hosted a virtual discussion on COVID-19: Considerations for the Medical/Hospital Laboratory for medical laboratory professionals and CariPHLN members. This virtual training package for medical and hospital laboratories was attended by more than 260 participants across the region.
- April 14-15, 2020: CARPHA in association with Ministry of Health, Trinidad and Tobago, UWI and PAHO held a two-days virtual training “An Introduction to Laboratory Diagnosis, Molecular Biology and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) for the COVID-19 Laboratory Response”.
- Laboratory Updates No. 9 and 10** were circulated to all stakeholders on April 4, 2020. Update 9 included updates to case definitions and update 10 included the testing algorithm. **Revised Requirements for Sampling of Suspected Cases:** Following recent consultations with PAHO/WHO clinical advisors and based on scientific guidance received, CARPHA has increased the time period during which samples can be taken from suspected cases of COVID-19. Samples can be taken **from as early as day 0 to as much as ten (10) days following the onset of symptoms**. Nasopharyngeal and Oropharyngeal swabs (paired) are being accepted for testing at CMML. Neither urine nor serum will be further required.
- The Turnaround time (TAT) of PCR results, a quality indicator of laboratory performance is on average to date 20 h 59 m. This is currently faster than the set TAT for COVID-19 PCR tests (24-48 h).



## Communication and Information

- CARPHA produced a video titled: **The CARPHA Testing Process for COVID-19**, which highlights the process from sample receipt to testing and result dissemination.  
<https://youtu.be/HPWuf1z3QWM>
- On April 21, 2020, Dr. Joy St. John, participated in a webinar discussion focused on trends and impacts on social, economic and security policies. The webinar was hosted by the Florida International University. **COVID-19 & the Caribbean** is part of the FIU's series on the current pandemic. The video can be viewed [here](#).
- Members of CARPHA's staff attended PAHO's virtual Media conference held on April 14, 2020.
- April 9, 2020 - Dr. Joy St. John joined the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to discuss COVID-19: Current Status/Future Trends. The webinar was hosted by the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU).
- CARPHA Communications Unit continues to produce social media products for various audiences and has maintained an active social media presence on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.
- The latest media release, infographics and other relevant guidelines are available on CARPHA's website. Available from: <http://carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus>.



## Logistics and Planning

CARPHA is expanding its Human Resource skills bank to facilitate, as the need arises, the rapid recruitment and deployment of short-term emergency response consultants to CARPHA and its Member States ([see CARPHA – Call for Experts: COVID-19 Flyer](#)). Interested applicants are invited to submit an expression of interest and CV by email to [HRM@CARPHA.ORG](mailto:HRM@CARPHA.ORG) along with the completed [Emergency Response Deployment – Skills List document accessible](#) on CARPHA website.

## Stakeholder Engagement

CARPHA is working closely with various stakeholders for a coordinated regional response, and as such has engaged with stakeholders in multiple ways, including the following:

- April 21 and 22, 2020: Dr. St. John participated in first series of the Working Group meetings for Common Public Health Policy for CARICOM. This will be recurring activity.
- April 20, 2020: Dr. St. John attended meeting with USAID on COVID-19.
- April 18, 2020: CARPHA held a coordination meeting with Ministry of Health, Trinidad and Tobago and PAHO.

CARPHA continues its ongoing communications and meetings with the Council for Human and Social Development, CARICOM, Chief Medical Officers, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, PAHO regional representatives, private organizations, public associations, regional agencies and organizations to advise on regional health response, guidelines and coordination to COVID-19 for proactive actions for developing situation in the Caribbean. *A full list of CARPHA actions to date are available.*

## Way Forward

CARPHA is reminding Member States to **ramp up their disease surveillance efforts for acute respiratory infections/severe acute respiratory infections both at the primary and secondary care levels, as a matter of urgency**. This is to include widening their surveillance focus to be able to detect any cases that have not travelled, which can be an early indication of local transmission.

**The WHO Director General has asked that individuals and countries refrain from using therapeutics that have not been demonstrated to be effective in the treatment of COVID-19. Various trials are underway to test drugs for use in treating COVID-19 cases. Discussions are underway in the region to determine participation in the WHO SOLIDARITY trial.**

CARPHA is working with technical experts across the Region to provide up-to-date guidance and technical advice to CMS. New guidelines have been prepared for the management of COVID-19 cases on airlines and guidance for Hotel Workers. CARPHA remains committed to providing support and guidance to Member States on how to strengthen their health systems response should there be person-to-person transmission in the Caribbean.

CARPHA continues to work through the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Health Security and the various regional coordination efforts to engage and support Member States, regional and international partners for the health security of the region.

CARPHA recognises there is need for accurate information in this time of uncertainties. CARPHA documents can be accessed as a reliable source of information from our [website](#). Available on the website are **Technical Documents, Media Releases and Communications Material**.

## References

- WHO, 2020. Laboratory testing for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in suspected human cases. Interim guidance. 19 March 2020. Available from: <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/laboratory-testing-for-2019-novel-coronavirus-in-suspected-human-cases-20200117>
- WHO, 2020. Clinical management of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) when COVID-19 disease is suspected. 13 March 2020. Available from: [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/clinical-management-of-severe-acute-respiratory-infection-when-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-is-suspected](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/clinical-management-of-severe-acute-respiratory-infection-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected)
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