



The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

29 October 2021

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 23-29 October 2021, there were 169 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 115 (68%) were from New Providence;
- 80 (47%) were males and 89 (53%) were females;
- 16 cases (15 from New Providence and 1 from Grand Bahama) were travel-related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 29 October 2021 was 157,118 tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 22-29 October 2021 (data reported last week only included information to 21 October 2021), there were 32 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 0 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among new cases 24 (75%) were from Providenciales, 6 (19%) were from Grand Turk, 1 (3%) North Caicos and 1 (3%) South Caicos.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 1433 (48.2%) were males and 1541 (51.8%) were females as of 27 October 2021;

The total number of Real time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 29 October 2021 was 38,169 and 271,733 tests respectively.

GLOBAL

245,019,856 Cases
4,973,928 Deaths

REGION OF THE AMERICAS

93,368,055 Cases
2,289,336 Deaths

THE BAHAMAS

22,396 Confirmed
465 Active
21,100 Recovered
65 Hospitalized
643 Deaths

TURKS & CAICOS

2,980 Confirmed
45 Active
2,902 Recovered
23 Deaths

Total cases and deaths, as of 29 October 2021

The Bahamas

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	17064	461
Grand Bahama	2548	99
Abaco	654	17
Eleuthera	688	11
Exuma	354	9
Bimini/Cat Cay	238	11
Berry Islands	111	2
Inagua	56	2
Andros	276	8
Long Island	109	4
Cat Island	99	2
Acklins	28	0
San Salvador	16	0
Crooked Island	33	0
Mayaguana	18	2
Ragged Island	0	0
Pending	104	12
TOTAL	22396	643

Turks and Caicos Islands

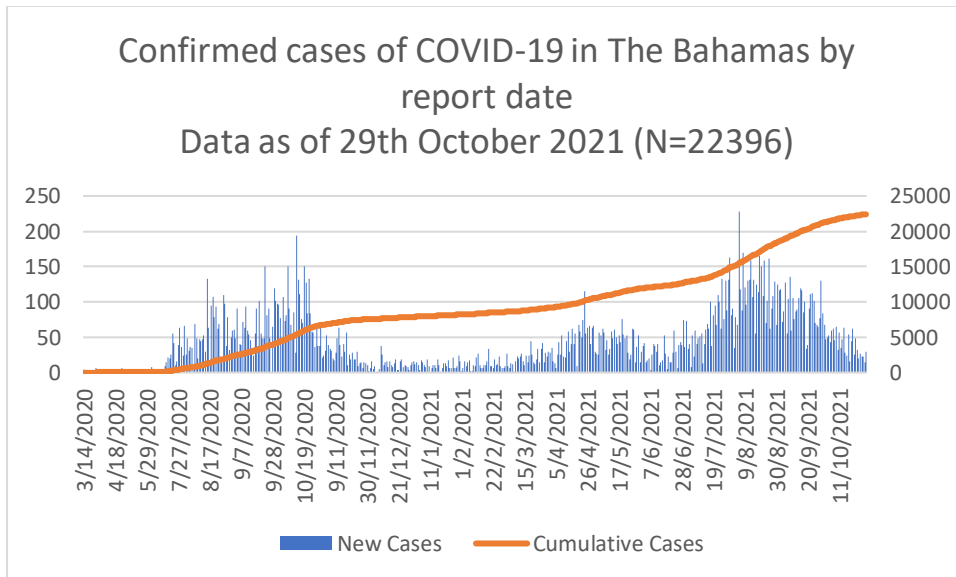
Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	2448	18
North Caicos	99	0
Parrot Cay	13	0
Grand Turk	333	5
South Caicos	59	0
Middle Caicos	27	0
Ambergris Cay	1	0
TOTAL	2980	23

SITUATION SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

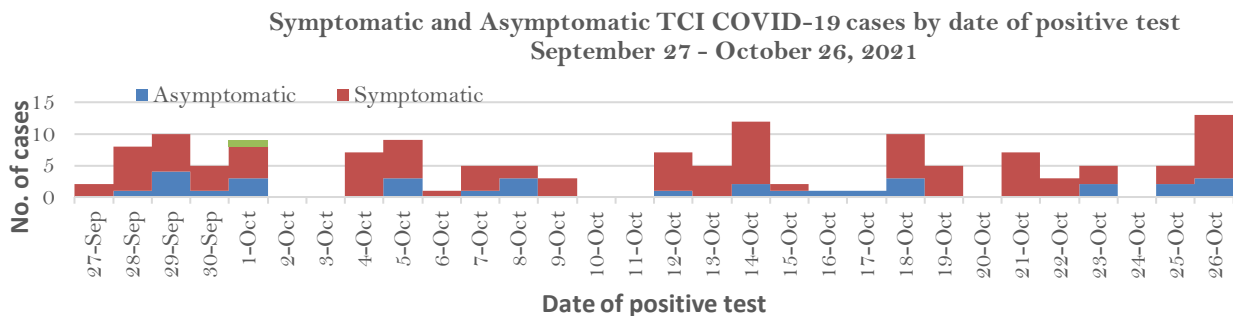
The Bahamas

- There is a decrease in the incidence of new COVID-19 cases, COVID-19 related deaths, and hospitalizations.
- Emergency Orders will remain in place until 13 November 2021.

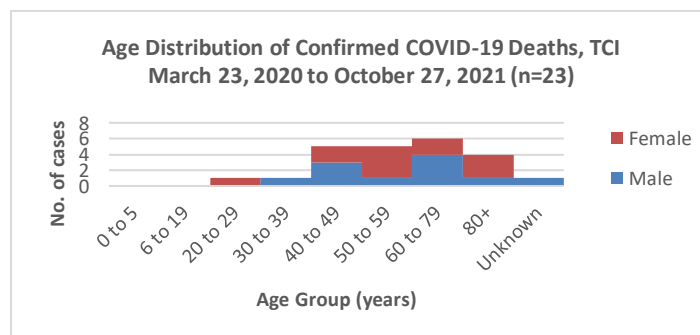


Turks and Caicos Islands

- The number of reported cases is steady.



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 80



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 80

RESPONSE

PAHO/WHO continues to provide both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands with access to updated technical guidelines, technical assistance and situational updates related to the COVID-19 response.

The Bahamas

- COVID-19 vaccine distribution continued throughout New Providence and Grand Bahama. An additional vaccination site operated from the Mall at Marathon on 28 October 2021.
- As of 23 October 2021, 132,240 persons received their first dose of either the Astra Zeneca or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, and 127,567 persons were fully vaccinated including those who received the one dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, representing 39% of the population.
- The pilot free COVID-19 Rapid Antigen testing programme which took place 20-22 October 2021 on the island of Inagua, yielded 180 tests representing approximately 20% of residents being tested and three positive cases.
- On 27 October 2021, the pilot free COVID-19 Rapid Antigen testing programme moved to the island of Eleuthera and took place until 28 October 2021.
- On 28 October 2021, the Chinese Government made a donation of high flow oxygen machines, patient monitors, and ventilators to assist with the COVID-19 response efforts.
- The COVID-19 Mobile Unit continues to operate and provide vaccinations to individuals who are homebound, hearing impaired, mentally challenged, physically challenged, and visually impaired as well as their caretakers.
- Restrictions continue on the amount of traffic into and out of PMH with only emergency cases being allowed for service. Hospitalizations continue to increase.
- The Public Hospitals Authority continues to request that all persons presenting to PMH for emergency care who have taken a COVID-19 test within 72 hours to present the same to the Emergency Room to accelerate triage and treatment.
- The PMH Morgue continues to operate over its capacity.
- Moderate to severe COVID-19 cases continue to be treated at PMH, Doctors Hospital West and the Rand Memorial Hospital (RMH) and less severe cases at the South Beach Health Center.
- COVID-19 laboratory PCR testing continues at the National Reference Laboratory (NRL), PMH, RMH and private sector laboratories.
- A National Respiratory Surveillance Genomics Database is in use by the NRL for genetic analysis. Several genomic deletions and variant mutations have been identified by the NRL.
- The Alpha, Delta, and Gamma, variants of concern, and the Iota, variant of interest, were detected among samples previously sent to the Fiocruz Laboratory in Brazil for genomic sequencing.
- Results are pending for ten COVID-19 samples sent in March 2021 to the Caribbean Public Health Agency.
- The national authorities continue to require non-fully vaccinated travelers to have a negative real time PCR test, the completion of a daily on-line survey for fourteen days after arrival and depending upon the responses, rapid antigen testing five- days post entry for persons 12 and older only.
- Fully-vaccinated travellers, and children between ages 2 and 11 years continue to require a COVID-19 negative test (either PCR or rapid antigen) done within five days of travel into country.
- An on-line contact tracing course continues to be offered through the University of The Bahamas.
- A SharePoint platform continues to be utilized for multiple user entry of contact tracing data, case investigation and laboratory test results.
- The Public Hospital's Authority continues to distribute personal protective equipment across all public hospitals and clinics.
- Ministry of Health continues to provide telemedicine, telepsychology, mental health, and psychosocial support services.
- Ministry of Health, in collaboration with PAHO/WHO and other partners, continues to implement a communication campaign to increase immunization coverage for influenza and other vaccines.
- Work continues in adapting and implementing the National COVID-19 Vaccine Plan to the changing situation with respect to access to vaccines, with support from PAHO/WHO.

Turks and Caicos Islands

- COVID-19 vaccine distribution continued throughout the islands including for children ages 12-15 years of age.
- More than 75% of the population is fully vaccinated.
- Persons aged over 50 years and the most vulnerable population continue to receive booster vaccines.
- The Alpha, Gamma and Delta B.1.617.2 Variants of Concern was confirmed to be in-country.
- Persons continue to register for the COVID-19 vaccine via the online portal which is available in three languages: English, French-Creole, and Spanish.
- Go.Data continues to be utilized for field data collection and contact tracing investigations.
- Community drive-through services continue to provide access to COVID-19 tests throughout the islands.
- The National Public Health Laboratory continues to conduct COVID-19 PCR testing.
- The communication education campaign continues with communication materials on the COVID-19 vaccine shared via traditional means and social media. COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy public service announcements were released this past week.
- A Cuban health contingent of 20 persons continues to operate in medical facilities through a bilateral agreement between the two countries.
- PAHO/WHO continues to assist with coordination for genomic sequencing of samples to the FioCruz Laboratory in Brazil.

GAPS/CHALLENGES

- Public compliance with public health protocols and vaccination hesitancy continue to present challenges in both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands. Vaccine hesitancy is of particular concern among health care workers.
- There continues to be a risk of introduction of additional new variants to both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands due to the emergence and spread of COVID-19 variants in several countries from which tourists originate.
- While The Bahamas has capacity to identify the presence of COVID-19 variants, neither The Bahamas nor Turks and Caicos Islands have in-country sequencing capacity. This presents a challenge for the timely identification of new variants.
- Both countries are challenged by the limited global supply of Cepheid Test Kits and other supplies required for COVID-19 testing. Turks and Caicos Islands is particularly challenged as it is only possible for them to source Cepheid Test Kits through the United Kingdom Government.
- The Bahamas risks using current stocks of syringes for their National Immunization Programme for COVID-19 vaccine distribution due to limited global supply.
- A nursing shortage has been identified in The Bahamas and there are concerns about the delivery of healthcare services.
- In The Bahamas, 5-10% of health care workers in the public sector are in quarantine.
- Recent increase in cases in the Southern Bahamas was a cause of concern given the limited medical infrastructure on those islands.