



The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

25 February 2022

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 19-25 February 2022, there were 80 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1 COVID-19 related death.

Among the new cases:

- 63 (79%) were from New Providence;
- 43 (54%) males and 37 (46%) females;
- 15 cases (all from New Providence) were travel-related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 25 February 2022 was 219,794 tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 19-25 February 2022, there were 16 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 0 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among new cases, 16 (100%) cases were from Providenciales.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 2806 (48.0%) were males, 3030 (51.8%) were females, and 19 (0.3%) unknown as of 25 February 2022;

The total number of Real time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 25 February 2022 was 56,595 and 400,860 tests respectively.

Total cases and deaths, as of 25 February 2022
The Bahamas Turks and Caicos Islands

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	26063	547
Grand Bahama	3370	121
Abaco	791	23
Eleuthera	832	18
Exuma	552	10
Bimini/Cat Cay	271	13
Berry Islands	152	4
Inagua	85	3
Andros	375	9
Long Island	143	4
Cat Island	134	3
Acklins	41	0
San Salvador	18	0
Crooked Island	34	0
Mayaguana	21	2
Ragged Island	0	0
Pending	239	14
TOTAL	33121	771

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	4780	24
North Caicos	130	0
Parrot Cay	20	0
Grand Turk	772	9
South Caicos	116	1
Middle Caicos	35	0
Ambergris Cay	3	0
Pine Cay	1	0
Salt Cay	2	0
Unknown	0	3
TOTAL	5859	36

THE BAHAMAS

33,121 Confirmed
5,922 Active
26,216 Recovered
24 Hospitalized
771 Deaths

TURKS & CAICOS

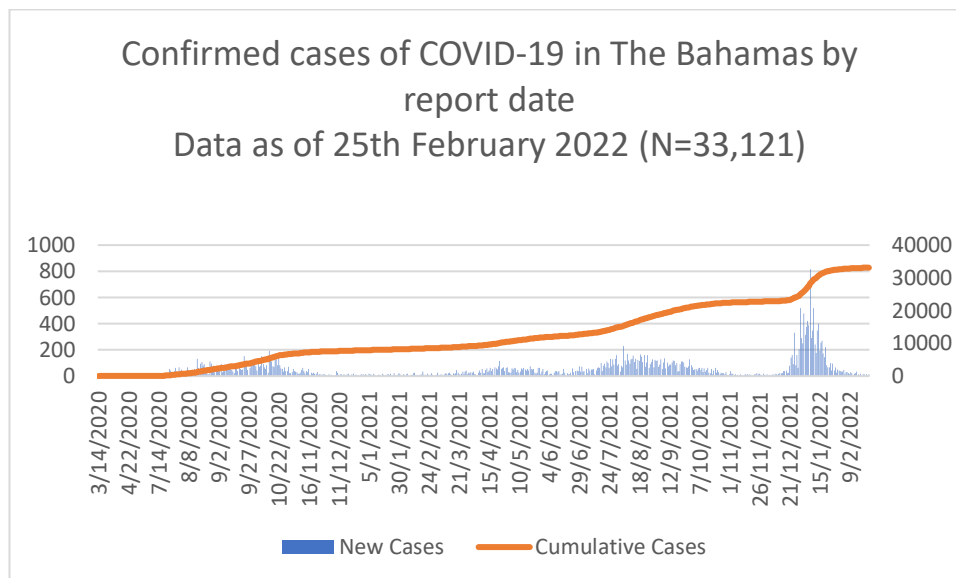
5,859 Confirmed
22 Active
5,787 Recovered
0 Hospitalized
36 Deaths

SITUATION SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

The Bahamas

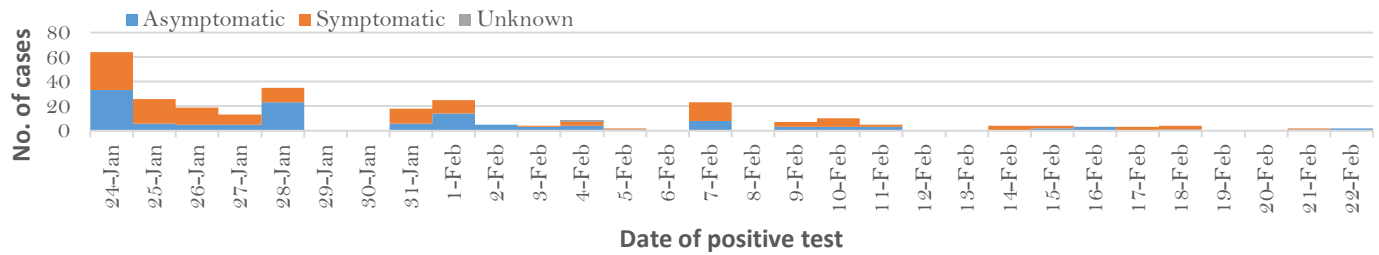
- There is a decrease in the incidence of new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in country.
- The Health Services (COVID-19) (Prevention and Management of Community Spread) Rules, 2021 and the Health Services (COVID-19) (General) Rules, 2021 remain in effect.
- Effective 20 February 2021, the following changes were announced to the Health and Safety protocols:
 - A maximum of 30 persons is permitted for indoor group exercise;
 - A funeral service may be conducted with casket or urn present;
 - Fifty percent occupancy is permitted at a church or religious service on Grand Bahama and New Providence;
 - Seventy-five percent seating is permitted in restaurants and patrons must be either fully vaccinated or present a negative COVID-19 test;
 - A maximum of 40 persons is permitted for an indoor social gathering at a private residence;
 - Patrons at a social gathering at a facility must be either fully vaccinated or present a negative COVID-19 test;
 - A maximum of 100 persons is permitted at outdoor social gatherings and attendees must be either fully vaccinated or present a negative COVID-19 test;



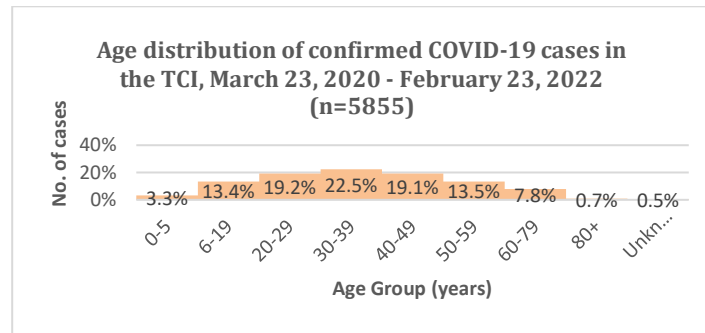
Turks and Caicos Islands

- There is a decrease in the incidence of new COVID-19 cases in country.
- On 24 February 2022 it was announced that the following will apply effective 28 February 2022 until 31 March 2022:
 - Return to full capacity for bars, churches, discotheques, funerals, nightclubs, religious places of worship, restaurants and weddings; be increased to 100% of their approved capacity;
 - Written permission must be given by the Chief Medical Officer or Chief Environmental Health Officer as well as written approval (permit) from the Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR) for social gatherings inclusive of beach events over 100 persons.
- Further it was announced effective 28 February 2022, the following will be discontinued:
 - Patrons of bars, discotheques, nightclubs and restaurants will no longer be required to be fully vaccinated or have a negative COVID-19 test done within 24-hours;
 - No restrictions for commercial/excursion boat owners;
 - No logbooks will be required for any establishment.

Symptomatic and Asymptomatic TCI COVID-19 cases by date of positive test January 24 to February 22, 2022



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 97



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 97

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 including extended and booster dose vaccinations continued throughout The Bahamas.
- As of 19 February 2022, 151,654 persons received their first dose of either the Astra Zeneca or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, and 161,251 persons were fully vaccinated including those who received the one dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.
- Vaccination pop-up sites were held at the Yellow Elder Park in Yellow Elder Gardens and the Mother Butler Park in Meadow Street.
- 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 the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) and the Rand Memorial Hospital (RMH) in Grand Bahama with only emergency cases being allowed for service.
- Moderate to severe COVID-19 cases continue to be treated at PMH, Doctors Hospital West and the 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.
- An on-line contact tracing course continues to be offered through the University of The Bahamas.
- Go.Data continues to be utilized for data collection of confirmed COVID-19 cases and contact tracing.
- Health visas are no longer needed for Bahamian citizens and permanent residences returning to The

Bahamas.

- Incoming travellers and persons travelling from Grand Bahama or New Providence must present a negative COVID-19 test taken within 72 hours. For fully vaccinated persons, this may be a RT-PCR test or Rapid Antigen COVID-19 test and for non-vaccinated persons this will be a RT-PCR test.
- On the fifth day post arrival, incoming travellers and persons travelling from Grand Bahama or New Providence must take a Rapid Antigen COVID-19 test and submit results to the travel health visa website. Should this test be positive, an RT-PCR test must be taken and the person placed in mandatory isolation.
- For persons out to sea on the second day of their stay in-country, they must take a Rapid Antigen COVID-19 test at the first Port of Call and submit results to the travel health visa website.
- The Public Hospital's Authority continues to distribute personal protective equipment across all public hospitals and clinics.
- A Cuban health contingent of 42 Cuban specialized Nurses continues to support clinical care through a bilateral agreement between the two countries.
- Ministry of Health and Wellness continues to provide telemedicine, telepsychology, mental health, and psychosocial support services.
- Ministry of Health and Wellness, 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.
- PAHO/WHO continues to assist The Bahamas in obtaining swabs for COVID-19 testing.

Turks and Caicos Islands

- COVID-19 vaccine distribution continued throughout the islands, including for children ages 12-15 years of age.
- More than 83% of the population is fully vaccinated with 88% of persons receiving at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination.
- Persons aged over 50 years and the most vulnerable population continue to receive booster vaccines.
- All persons over the age of 18 years and high-risk persons over 16 years of age may receive a third dose or booster shot of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The Alpha, Gamma, Delta B.1.617.2 and Omicron 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.
- A Cuban health contingent of 20 persons was given an extension of an additional six months to support operations in the TCI Hospitals 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 and resistance continue to present challenges in both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands. Vaccine hesitancy/resistance is of particular concern among health care workers and other emergency and frontline workers.
- 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.

- A nursing shortage has been identified in The Bahamas and 50 Cuban nurses were recently hired to address this issue as well as staff burnout.
- In The Bahamas, 5-10% of health care workers in the public sector are in quarantine.
- Both countries risk importation of new variants as they immerge. While confirmation of the variant was made in the Turks and Caicos Islands, the epidemiological situation in The Bahamas is suggestive of the circulation of the Omicron variant.