

COVID-19 CASES IN THE GAZA STRIP

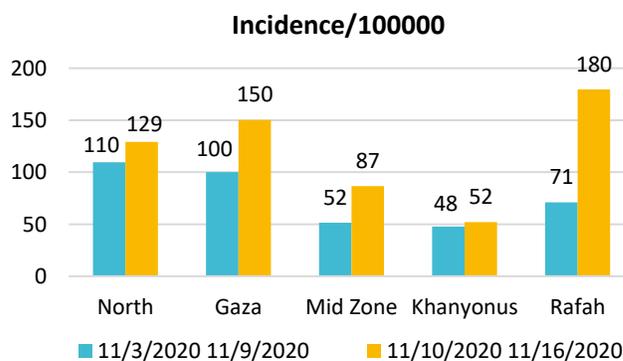
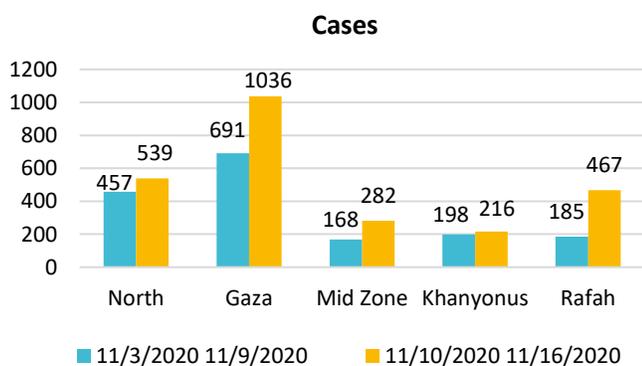
Weekly comparison from 3/11-9/11 to 10/11-16/11 2020

GENERAL

	Weekly cases		Cumulative	
	3/11/2020 9/11/2020	9/11/2020 16/11/2020	31/1- 16/11/2020	
# of samples tested	total	18,453	17,462	156,651
# of positive cases*	total	1700	2,540	11,471
	mild	1671	2,493	
	moderate	7	13	
	severe	17	25	
	critical	5	9	
positivity rate	total	9.2%	14.55%	7.3%
	contacts	11.5%	15.3%	
	suspect	21.9%	25.5%	
	surveillance	5.7%	8.8%	

*The reported classification of positive cases by severity reflects the status at first day of detection. This classification are possible to change by time according to progress of COVID19 infection among patients.

There is an increase in reported positive COVID19 cases along all Gaza Strip governorates. Regarding the incidence per 100,000 populations, there is a noticeable increase in this rate at Rafah governorate (from 71/100,000 up to 180/100,000) and also at Gaza governorate where it increased from 100/100,000 to 150/100,000.



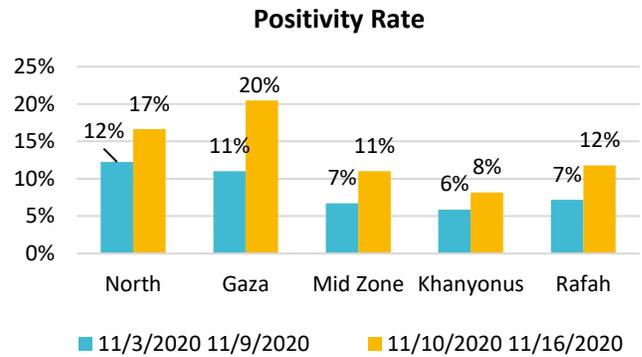
The PNIPH/WHO supported MOH in developing a traffic light system (TLS) which distributes the new detected COVID19 cases geographically at Gaza Strip neighborhoods during the previous 7 days. This system classifies the neighborhoods by color code (Red, Yellow, Green) to visualise the risky areas and support decisions.

The map below which is developed by MOH reflects that 36 neighborhoods out of 96 were coded by red color on 16 November 2020, while they were only 20 on 9 November 2020. It is important to mention that the population living in the classified red neighborhoods forms more than 50% of population living in Gaza Strip.



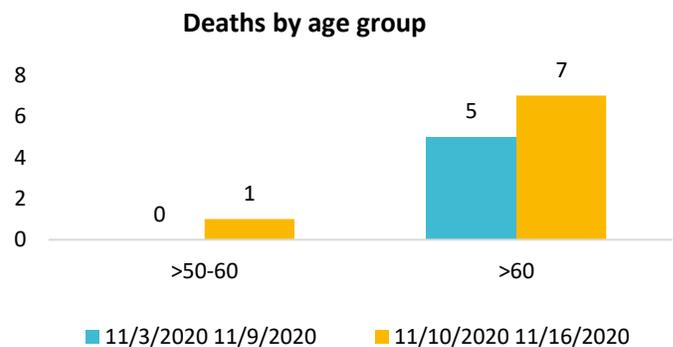
POSITIVITY RATE

- The positivity rate increased from 9% up to 14.5% along Gaza Strip comparing between the two reporting weeks. The overall positivity rate increased to 7.3% which is considered high in comparison with the acceptable positivity rate for EMRO region (5%).
- The positivity rate increased during the comparison weeks along all sample types (Contacts, suspected cases and random screening) as illustrated in the table above.
- The positivity rate increased in all districts and there is a noticeable increase at Gaza Governorate (from 10% to 20%) and at Rafah governorate (from 7% to 12%).



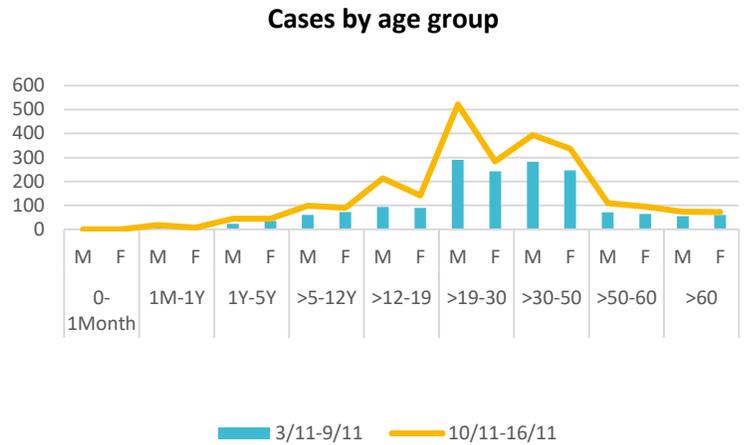
REPORTED DEATHS

- The total reported deaths in week 3/11-9/11 were five deaths all from age group higher than 60 as illustrated in the graph on the right. While the deaths increased to eight in the period from 10-16 November (one among age group 50-60, 7 among age group above 60).
- Regarding the distribution of deaths by gender, among the 5 reported deaths at the first reporting period 1 was male and 4 were females. While there were 6 male deaths and 2 female deaths at the second reporting period.



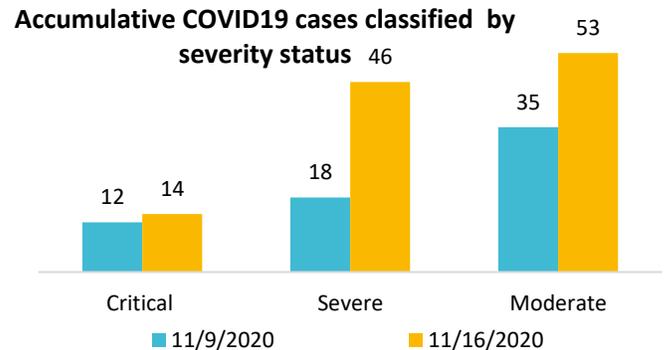
DISTRIBUTION OF CASES AMONG AGE GROUPS AND GENDER

- There is a noticeable increase in number of COVID-19 cases among young age groups (5-19) from both male and female groups. This increase should be studied if the reported COVID19 cases among these age groups are school and/or university students.
- The highest increase in number of COVID19 cases at the second reporting period if compared with the first reporting period is among males aging from 19-30 years where cases increased from 290 to 521.
- There is slight increase in reported cases among males and females above 50 years. This increasing trend during the last period is alarming where each reported case at older age group is at higher risk of developing complications and death.



DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 CASES BY SEVERITY

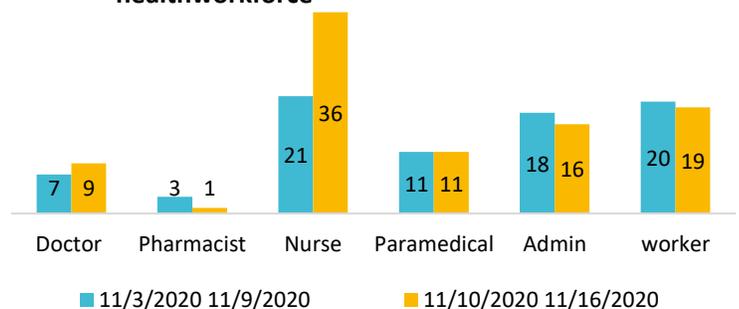
- The total number of accumulative severe and critical cases increased in this reporting week when comparing to the previous reporting week. This increase indicates that the infection is reaching more vulnerable groups at the community level.
- It worth noting that MOH classifies patients who need care at high dependency units (which is less intense than ICU) as severe cases while classifies patients who need ICU as critical cases.
- There is an increase in reporting of severe and critical COVID19 cases among young age groups 30-50 years.



HEALTH CARE WORKERS INFECTIONS

- There is an increase in newly detected COVID-19 cases among health workforce when comparing between the two reporting weeks. From the noticeable observations this week, the increased number of infections among female nurses/midwives and paramedics between the two reporting periods.

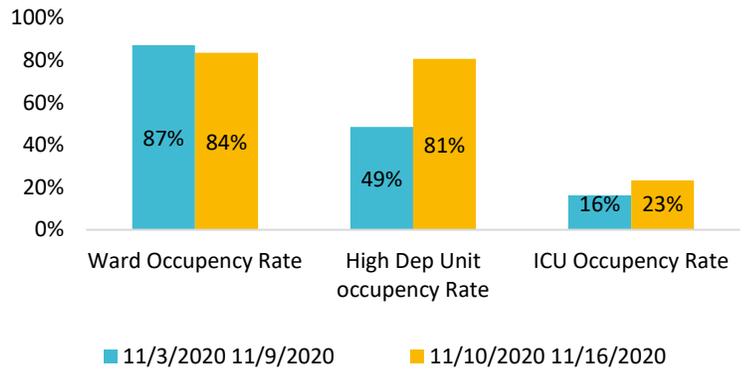
New reported COVID19 infection among healthworkforce



HEALTH SYSTEM CAPACITY (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT)

- The MOH changed the admission criteria for COVID19 patients and started home isolation for mild cases who do not have known co-morbidities. This led to decreasing total ward occupancy rate for mild and moderate cases from 87% to 84%.
- Among available ICU beds, the occupancy rate increased from 16% to 23%.
- Among available high dependency units, the occupancy rate increased from 49% to 81%.
- The health system tolerance capacity decreased 34 days on 9 November to 22 days on 16 November 2020. This number will decrease up to 16 days if COVID19 infection continued at the same pattern of last week.

% COVID-19 beds occupancy rate



RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is an increase in number of cases in all districts in the Gaza Strip which will increase the rate of infection among the most vulnerable population. More than 36 neighborhoods in the strip are classified with RED code and more than 50% of population in Gaza strip are living in these neighborhoods.
- There is an increase in infections among older age groups indicating the urgent need for further measures to protect vulnerable populations and investigate the sources of infection.
- There is an increase in reported cases among school and university age groups both among males and females when comparing between the two reporting periods. This observation should be monitored closely and investigate if the increase is related to contact at schools and/or universities.
- There is an observed increase in number of reported COVID19 cases aging from >19-30 when comparing between the two reporting periods and mainly among males.
- There is a change in the status of severity of COVID-19 infection among younger age groups. This situation should be closely monitored.
- The capacity of the Oxygen station at the EGH should be urgently increased to serve the available 100 ICU and high dependency units.
- Increase monitoring on Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures at all health care settings and activate rapid detection and isolation of cases to decrease health workforce infections.
- **The previous report and this report reached similar alarming trends of increase in total cases, increase in the severity of cases and also higher utilization of existing MOH capacity. Thus, urgent and stricter social procedures are recommended to avoid further deterioration of the situation and potential breakdown of the health care system in Gaza.**