

COVID-19 CASES IN THE GAZA STRIP

Weekly epidemiological bulletin from (31/01 TO 06/02) AND (07/02 TO 13/02)

DATA SOURCES: MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH) DAILY REPORTS ON COVID-19 IN GAZA STRIP

GENERAL

Reporting Period	Weekly cases		Cumulative
	31-01-21 06-02-21	07-02-21 13-02-21	accumulative since 23/8/2020
# of samples tested	total 14,105	15,037	345,193
# of positive cases	total 1,231	971	53,514
# of closed cases	total 48,655	50,692	
# recovered cases (%closed)	48,126 (99%)	50,155 (99%)	
# reported deaths (%closed)	529 (1%)	537(1%)	
Classification of positive cases by severity*	mild	1,209	955
	moderate	4	6
	severe	12	6
	critical	6	4
Positivity rates (weekly)	total	8.73%	15.5% (overall)
	contacts	19.2%	20.1%
	suspect	21.1%	14.8%
	surveillance	3.2%	2.4%

* The reported classification of positive cases by severity reflects the status at first day of admission at the last day of the reporting week. This classification may change over time according to progression of COVID-19 infection among patients.

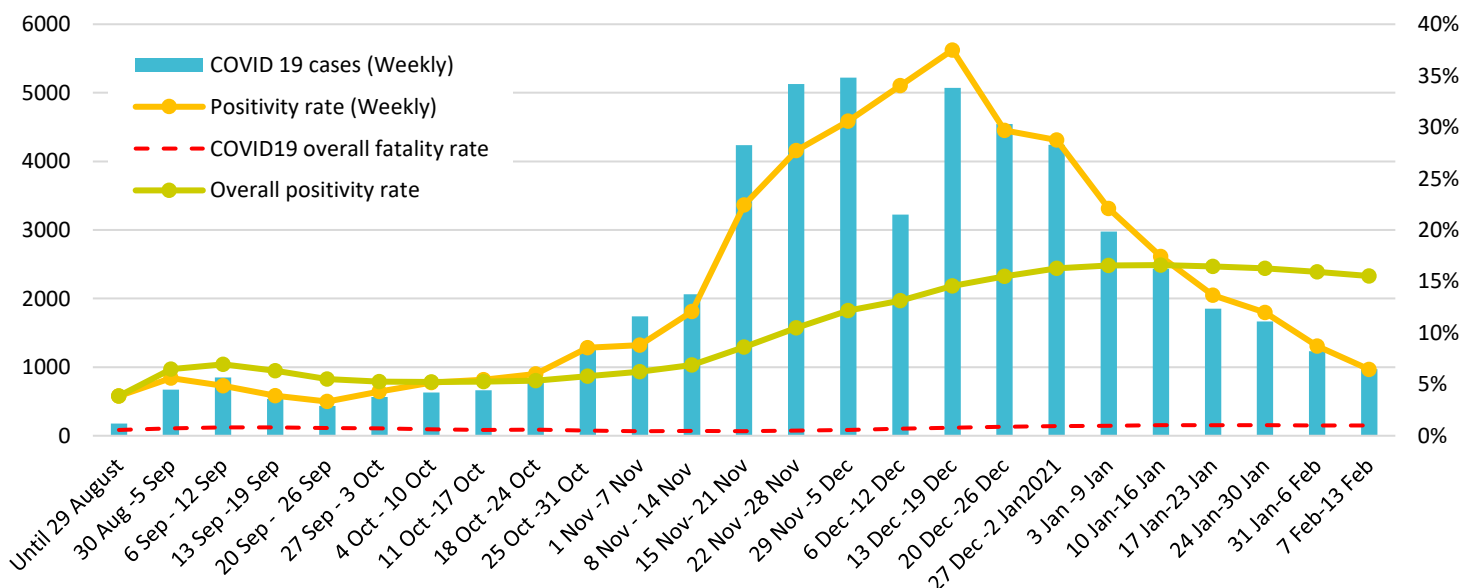


Figure 1: Reported weekly COVID-19 cases, weekly positivity rates, overall positivity rates and overall fatality rates

- Gradual decrease in positivity rates and number of newly reported COVID-19 cases during the last six weeks (Figure 1). Overall positivity rate also continues to decrease (Figure 1).
- Total number of tests increased to 15,037 between 7-13 February from 14,105 between 31 January-6 February 2021.
- Newly reported COVID-19 cases and incidence per 100,000 populations decreased in all Gaza Strip districts except for the North district (Figures 2 and 3).

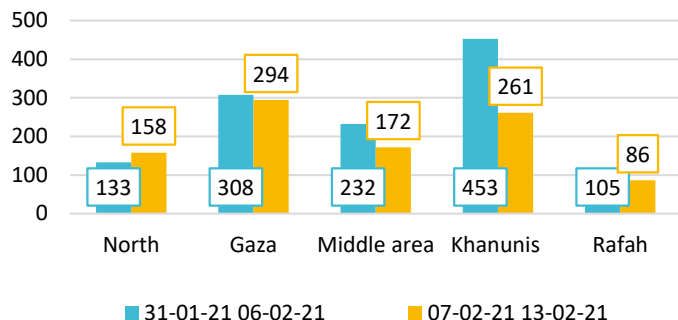


Figure 2: Newly reported weekly COVID-19 cases in Gaza Strip districts

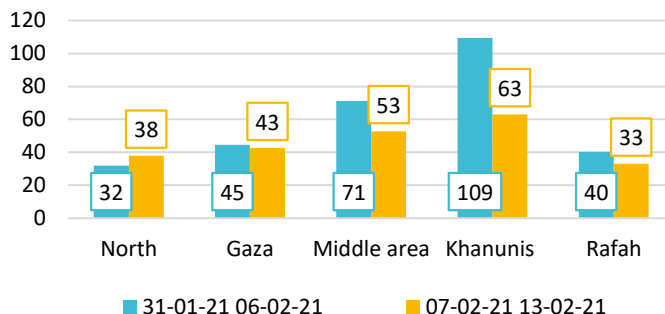


Figure 3: Incidence of weekly COVID-19 reported cases per 100,000 population in Gaza Strip districts

- Number of red coded areas decreased to 8 on 9 February from 14 on 2 February (Figure 4). Some areas remained red with small outbreaks detected in new areas such as Burajj camp and Zaitoon area, south Gaza city, reflected in Figure 4.



2 February 2021



9 February 2021

Figure 4: Geographical distribution of newly reported COVID-19 cases (7 days average) in Gaza Strip neighborhoods

POSITIVITY RATES

- Continued decrease in weekly COVID-19 positivity rates to 6.46% between 7-13 February from 8.73% between 31 January-6 February 2021.
- Decrease in weekly positivity rates occurred in North, Khanunis and Rafah between 7-13 February 2021, slightly increased in Middle area, and remained the same in Gaza (Figure 5).
- Positivity rates increased among contacts but decreased among the other two testing categories as illustrated in the general table on Page 1.
- Overall positivity rate continued to decrease and reached 15.5% on 13 February 2021.

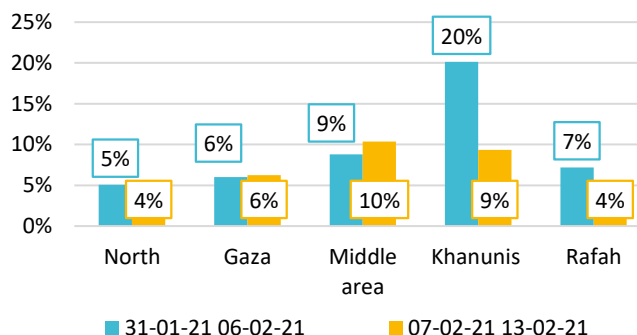


Figure 5: COVID-19 weekly positivity rates distributed by districts

DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 CASES AMONG AGE GROUPS AND GENDER

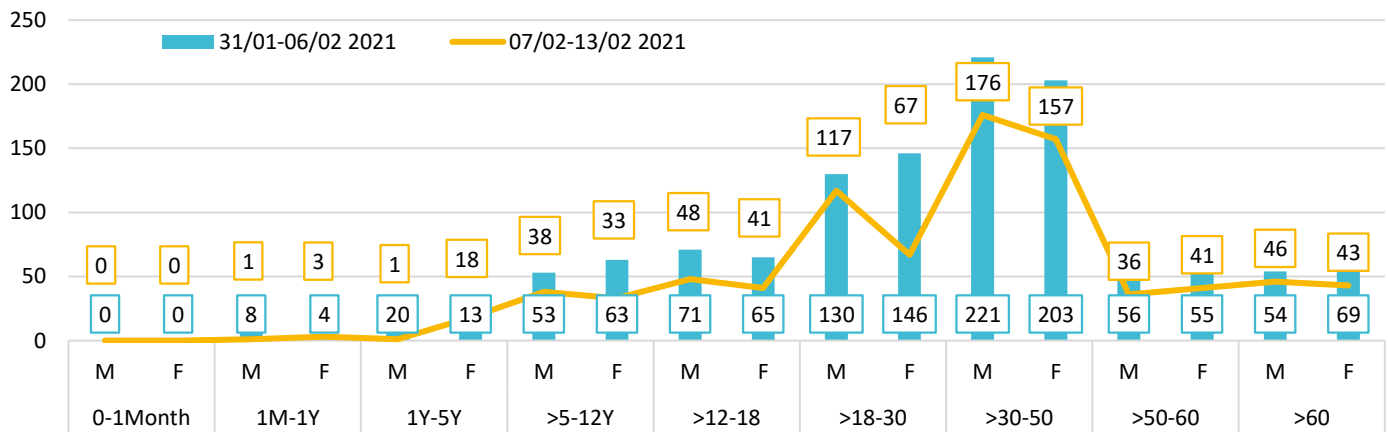


Figure 6: Weekly newly reported COVID-19 cases distributed by age groups and gender

- Highest reported COVID-19 cases among people aged 18 to 50 both between 31 January-6 February and 7-13 February 2021. A decreasing trend has been observed during the last six weeks. (Figure 6).
- Overall decrease in reported COVID-19 cases among all age groups and genders between 31 January-6 February and 7-13 February 2021 (Figure 6).

DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 DEATHS

- 8 COVID-19 deaths reported between 7-13 February, compared to 7 deaths reported between 31 January-6 February 2021. Majority of reported COVID-19 deaths are people aged 60 years and older (Figure 7).
- One death was reported among people aged >30-50 years old and two deaths among the age group >50-60 between 7-13 February, with no deaths reported among these two age groups between 31 January-6 February 2021 (Figure 7).
- Total reported deaths since the start of COVID-19 outbreak in the Gaza Strip until 13 February 2021 reached 537 with an accumulative COVID-19 fatality rate of 1%.
- Out of the 537 COVID-19 reported deaths, 306 were male (57%) and 231 were female (43%).

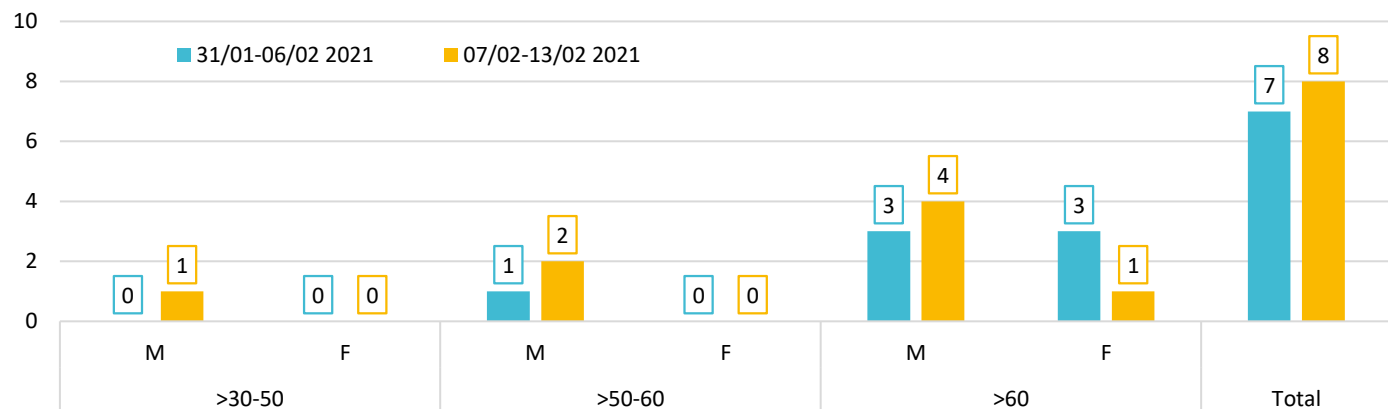


Figure 7: Distribution of reported COVID-19 deaths by age groups and gender

DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 CASES BY SEVERITY

- Cumulative moderate cases admitted to hospitals decreased to 20 on 13 February compared to 22 cases on 6 February 2021 (Figure 8).
- Cumulative severe cases admitted to hospitals slightly increased to 28 cases on 13 February compared to 33 cases on 6 February 2021 (Figure 8).
- Cumulative critical cases admitted to hospitals decreased to 4 cases on 13 February compared to 7 on 6 February 2021.
- Stable situation is in line with the lower number of newly reported COVID-19 cases and deaths. The number of admitted cases at severe health status remains higher than moderate cases, requiring further monitoring of number of admitted severe and critical cases.

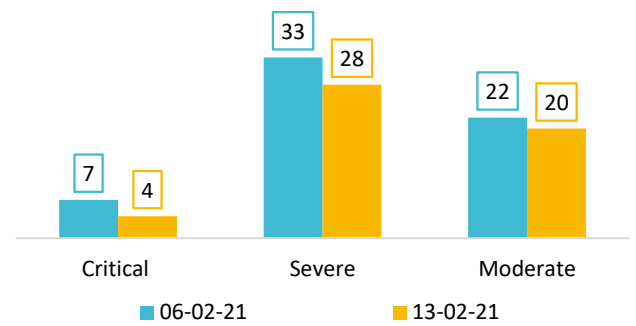


Figure 8: Classification of cumulative hospital admitted COVID-19 patients by severity

HEALTH SYSTEM CAPACITY (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT)

- Continued decrease in total bed occupancy rate in the last eight weeks, in line with gradual decrease in number of hospital-admitted COVID-19 patients.
- Total COVID-19 bed occupancy rate decreased to 13% on 13 February compared to 15% on 6 February 2021 (Figure 9).
- Decrease in high dependency and ICU occupancy rates (Figure 9).

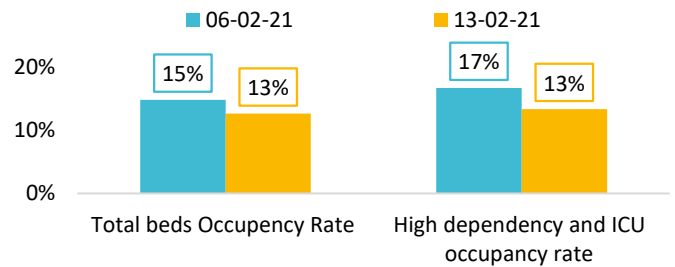


Figure 9: Occupancy rates of COVID-19 beds classified by type of bed

HEALTH CARE WORKER INFECTIONS

- Decrease/no change in number of active COVID-19 cases among most health workforce categories except for female paramedics (Figure 10).
- Decrease in number of active COVID-19 cases to 40 on 13 February from 59 on 6 February (Figure 10).
- Decrease in reported COVID-19 infections among health workforce to 18 between 7-13 February 2021 from 21 between 31 January-6 February 2021 (Figure 11).
- More than 50% of the newly infected workers between 7-13 February were working at hospitals (Figure 11).

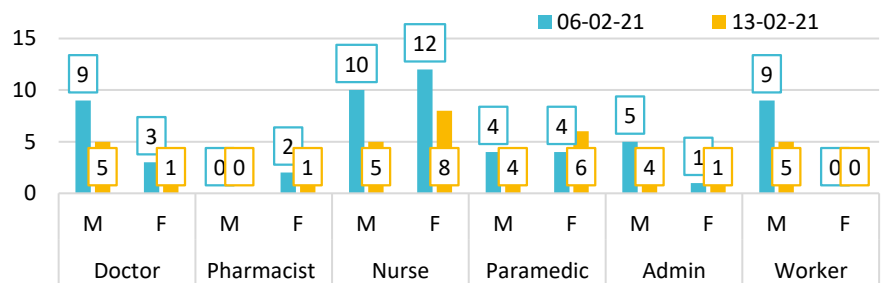


Figure 10: Active reported COVID-19 cases among health workforce distributed by gender and profession

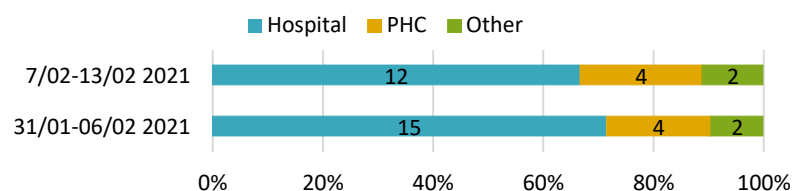


Figure 11: Distribution of newly weekly reported COVID-19 cases among health workforce distributed by work setting

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Total newly reported COVID-19 cases and positivity rates continue to decrease since the last seven reporting weeks in all Gaza Strip districts. Similarly, number of COVID-19 patients admitted to hospitals in severe and critical health condition, as well as bed occupancy rates continue to be stable and/or decrease, indicating a flattening of the curve of COVID-19 infections after implementing stricter public health measures.
- **With small outbreaks reported in southern Gaza, risk communication and community engagement should continue to focus on raising awareness among the broader population that the pandemic is not over yet and easing of restrictions may result in a resurgence of cases.**
- Monitoring, surveillance and trend analysis, and contact tracing should remain in place to evaluate the results of easing the measures during the coming weeks, combined with maintaining strict adherence to COVID-19 mitigation measures.
- **The total duration of COVID-19 immunity remains unclear, emphasizing the risk of re-infection among people with earlier confirmed COVID-19 infection.**
- Protection of the most vulnerable COVID-19 patients such as elderly and patients with known co-morbidities remains vital. The process of early hospital admission for these groups should be enforced to provide early supportive care to prevent the deterioration of their health conditions and late access to lifesaving care.
- **As COVID-19 cases are decreasing, health facilities can refocus their efforts on revitalising the provision of essential health services and elective care. Maintaining robust Infection Prevention Control (IPC) measures in all health facilities remains of vital importance to sustain the before mentioned achievements.**
- While the COVID-19 situation is clearly improving, the health system in the Gaza Strip remains fragile with MOH reporting 45% of all essential medicines and 33% of essential disposables at zero stock levels. Strengthening of the health care system and supporting vulnerable communities in the Gaza Strip should be the main goal.