

COVID-19 CASES IN THE GAZA STRIP

Weekly epidemiological bulletin from (07/02 TO 13/02 2021) AND (14/02 TO 20/02)

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

GENERAL

Reporting Period	Weekly cases		Cumulative
	07-02-21 13-02-21	14-02-21 20-02-21	accumulative since 23/8/2020
# of samples tested	total 15,037	12,628	357,821
# of positive cases	total 971	885	54,399
# of closed cases	total 50,692	52,469	
# recovered cases (%closed)	50,155 (99%)	51,926 (99%)	
# reported deaths (%closed)	537(1%)	543 (1%)	
Classification of positive cases by severity*	mild	955	875
	moderate	6	3
	severe	6	4
	critical	4	3
Positivity rates (weekly)	total	6.46%	15.2% (overall)
	contacts	20.1%	16.0%
	suspect	14.8%	24.0%
	surveillance	2.4%	2.2%

* 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.

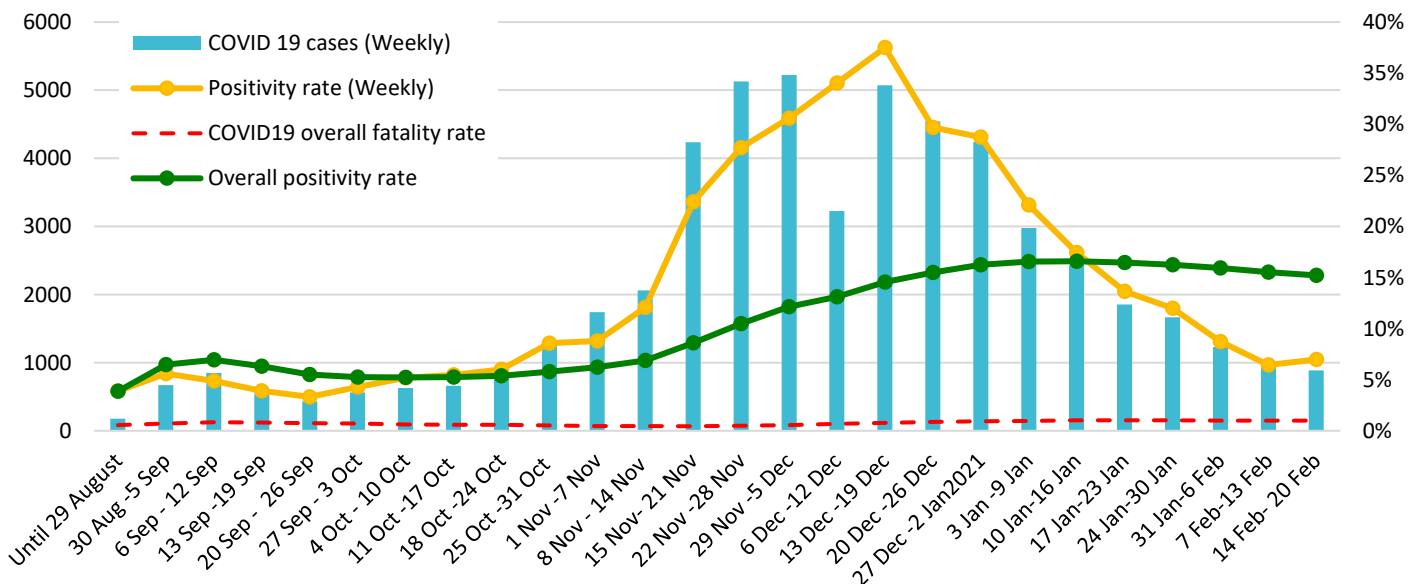


Figure 1: Reported weekly COVID-19 cases, weekly positivity rates, overall positivity rates and overall fatality rates

- Gradual decrease in weekly positivity rates and number of newly reported COVID-19 cases in the last weeks, with slight increase during this reporting week (Figure 1). The overall positivity rate continued to decrease (Figure 1).
- Total number of conducted tests decreased to 12,628 between 14-20 February from 15,037 between 7-13 February 2021.
- Newly reported COVID-19 cases and incidence per 10,000 populations decreased in all districts in the Gaza Strip except for Khanunis and Rafah districts (Figures 2 and 3).

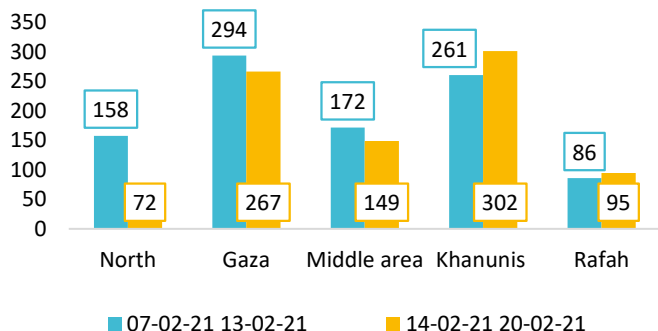


Figure 2: Newly reported weekly COVID-19 cases in Gaza Strip districts

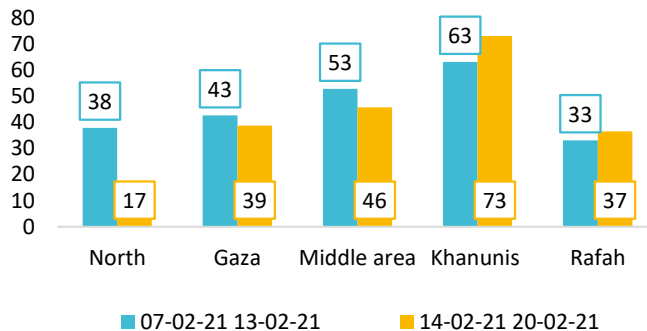


Figure 3: Incidence of weekly COVID-19 reported cases per 100,000 population in Gaza Strip districts

- Number of red coded areas decreased to 3 on 16 February from 8 on 9 February 2021 (Figure 4). Two of the areas are located in Khanunis district and one in Gaza district.



9 February 2021



16 February 2021

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

POSITIVITY RATES

- Increase in weekly COVID-19 positivity rates to 7.01% between 14-20 February 2021 compared to 6.46% between 7-13 February 2021 (Table on page 1).
- Decrease in weekly positivity rates occurred in North, Gaza and Middle area between 14-20 February 2021 while increased in Khanunis and Rafah districts (Figure 5).
- Weekly positivity rates decreased among two testing categories (contacts and surveillance) while increased among suspected cases as illustrated in the general table on page 1.
- Overall positivity rate up to 20 February 2021 continued to decrease and reached 15.2%.

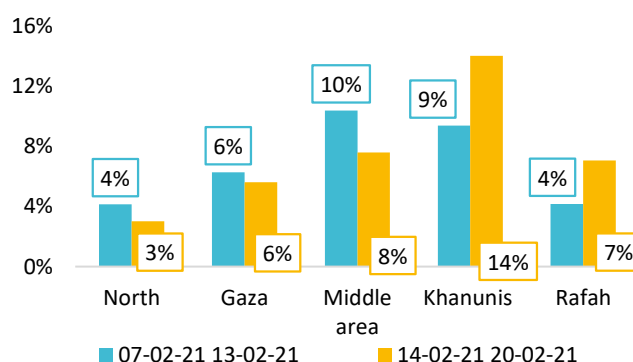


Figure 5: COVID-19 weekly positivity rates distributed by districts

DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 CASES AMONG AGE GROUPS AND GENDER

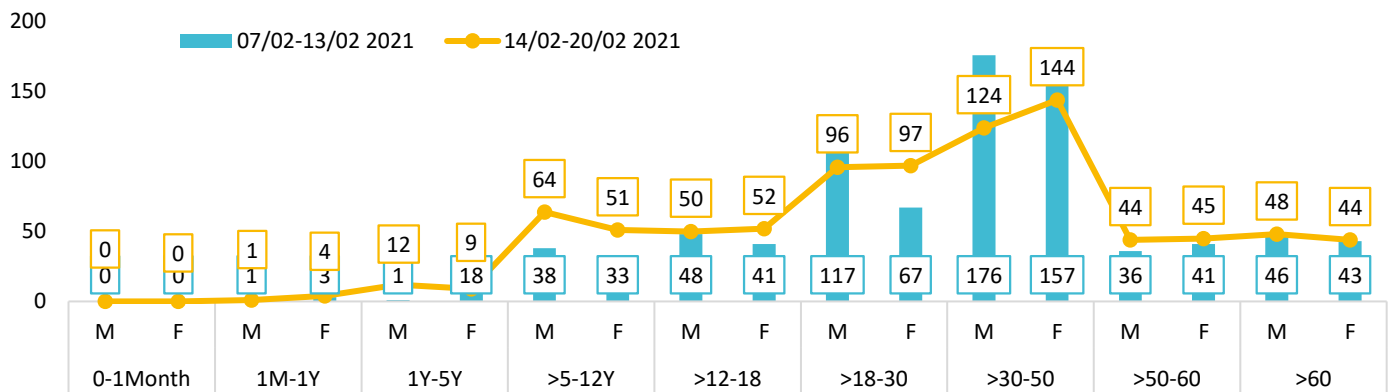


Figure 6: Weekly newly reported COVID-19 cases distributed by age groups and gender

- Increase in reported COVID-19 cases between 14-20 February 2021 among younger age groups (>5-12Y, >12-18, >18-30 “females”, >50-60, >60) (Figure 6). This increase should be closely monitored during the coming weeks especially after re-opening of schools and universities and lifting most of the movement restrictions.
- Highest reported COVID-19 cases are among people aged 18 to 50 in both reporting weeks.

DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 DEATHS

- Six COVID-19 deaths between 14-20 February compared to 8 deaths between 7-13 February 2021 (Figure 7).
- Majority of reported COVID-19 deaths are people aged 60 years and older (Figure 7). Deaths among females aged 60 and older increased from 1 to 3 comparing between the two reporting weeks.
- Total reported deaths since the start of COVID-19 outbreak in Gaza Strip until 13 February 2021 reached 543 with an accumulative COVID-19 fatality rate of 1%.
- Out of the 543 COVID-19 reported deaths, 309 were males (57%) and 234 were females (43%).

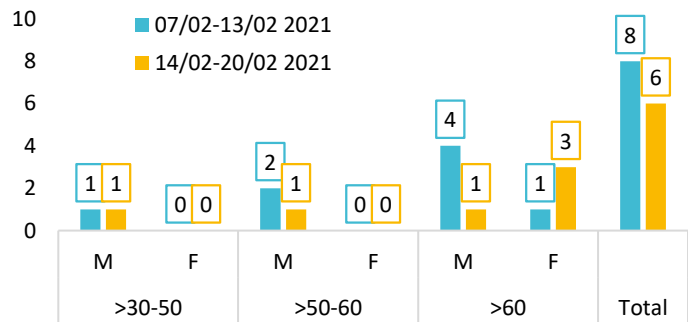


Figure 7: Distribution of reported COVID-19 deaths by age groups and gender

DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 CASES BY SEVERITY

- Cumulative moderate cases admitted to hospitals decreased to 13 on 20 February compared to 20 on 13 February 2021.
- Cumulative severe cases admitted to hospitals decreased to 18 cases on 20 February compared to 28 on 13 February 2021.
- Cumulative critical cases admitted to hospitals decreased to 3 cases on 20 February compared to 4 on 13 February 2021.
- Stability is in line with the lower number of newly reported COVID-19 cases and deaths. Still, number of admitted cases at severe health status remains higher than moderate cases and further monitoring of number of admitted severe and critical cases should be monitored.

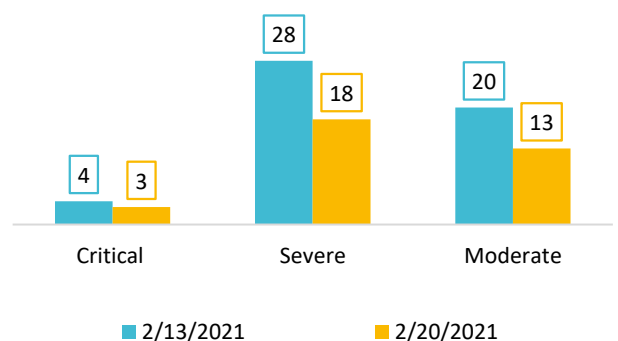


Figure 8: Classification of cumulative hospital admitted COVID-19 patients by severity

HEALTH SYSTEM CAPACITY (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT)

- Continuing decreasing trend in number of hospital-admitted COVID-19 patients since the last nine weeks.
- Decrease in COVID-19 bed occupancy rate as well as in high dependency and ICU occupancy rates to 9% on 20 February compared to 13% on 13 February 2021 (Figure 9).

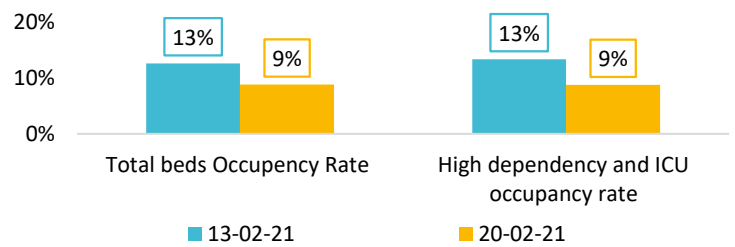


Figure 9: Occupancy rates of COVID-19 beds classified by type of bed

HEALTH CARE WORKERS INFECTIONS

- Increase in number of active COVID-19 cases to 51 on 20 February from 40 on 13 February 2021 (Figure 10).
- Increase in reported COVID-19 infections among health workforce to 31 between 14-20 February from 18 between 7-13 February 2021 (Figure 11). This increase should be closely monitored during the coming weeks.
- Over 50% of the newly infected workers between 14-20 February were working at hospitals (Figure 11).

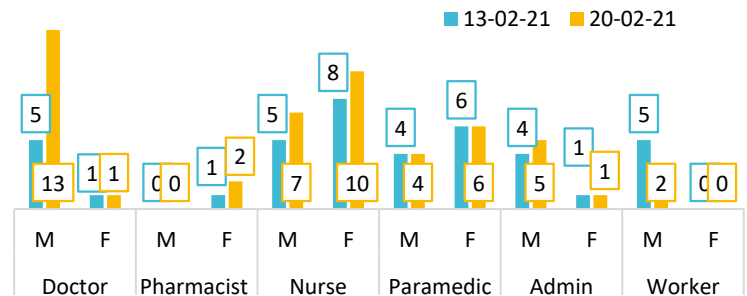


Figure 10: Active reported COVID-19 cases among health workforce distributed

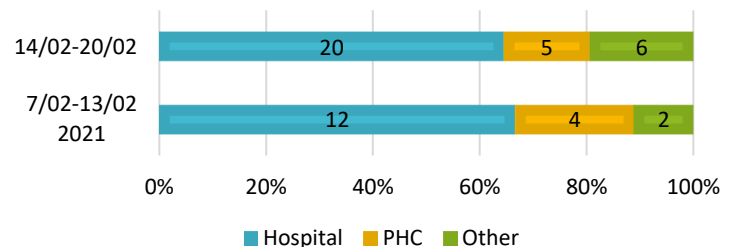


Figure 11: Distribution of newly weekly reported COVID-19 cases among health workforce distributed by work setting

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Slight increase in weekly positivity rate and new cases among some age groups (12-30 and 50 and above), in spite of continuing decreasing trend in newly reported number of COVID-19 cases since the last seven reporting weeks.
- Authorities in Gaza eased most preventive measures including re-opening of wedding halls and sport clubs. Clear monitoring, strong surveillance and trend analysis, and contact tracing should remain in place to evaluate the results of easing the measures during the coming weeks.
- 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.
- Increase in reported COVID-19 infections among health workforce reflects the necessity to maintain robust IPC measures in all health facilities to sustain the before mentioned achievements.
- The Gaza Ministry of Health (MOH) started receiving COVID-19 vaccines from the Palestinian Authority (around 2,000 doses) and donations from the United Arab Emirates (20,000 doses). In line with the quantities received, MOH started vaccinating elders with chronic health conditions, health care workers and other patients with life-threatening health conditions on 22 February 2021.