Ministry of Health
Vanuatu Government

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Vanuatu Situation Report #67 Issued 13 March-Covering 12-13 March 2022

SUMMARY AND DISEASE BURDEN

- On 04 March 2022, an active COVID-19 case was confirmed at Vila Central Hospital, indicating transmission at community level.
- **As of 07 March 2022, Efate and Offshore Islands have moved to Alert Level 3 (Very High) large scale community transmission. All provinces of Vanuatu are now on Alert Level 3 given reports of cases or movement of contact of cases in the six provinces of Vanuatu.**
- **A total of 259 confirmed cases have been reported since the beginning of 2022.**
- **20 new confirmed cases have been reported in the last 24 hours, 14 on Efate island, Shefa province and 6 on Santo island, Sanma province. No deaths reported.**

The best way to protect yourself, your family and your community is to follow the instructions provided by health authorities, follow public health prevention measures and to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19. WHO-recommended vaccines like AstraZeneca, Sinopharm and Johnson and Johnson are safe and effective.
Yellow highlights indicate where information has changed relative to the previous SitRep.

As of 13 March 2022, 12pm:

	Number of cases of COVID-19					
	National		Shefa		Sanma	
	Last 24 hours	2022 total	Last 24 hours	2022 total	Last 24 hours	2022 total
Confirmed	20	259	14	240	6	19
	Current status of confirmed cases detected in 2022					
	National		Shefa		Sanma	
	Last 24 hours	Currently	Last 24 hours	Currently	Last 24 hours	Currently
Active	19	221	14	203	5	18
	Last 24 hours	2022 total	Last 24 hours	2022 total	Last 24 hours	2022 total
Recovered	0	37	0	37	0	0
Deceased	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hospitalisations among confirmed cases					
	National		Shefa		Sanma	
	Last 24 hours	Active cases	Last 24 hours	Active cases	Last 24 hours	Active cases
Hospitalised for COVID-19	1	4	1	4	0	0
Critically ill of those hospitalised for COVID-19	1	2	1	2	0	0

Discrepancies with previous reports may result from lags in data entry and reporting. Increase and decrease of cases on a daily basis is dependent on the number of tests conducted and might not reflect the actual number of cases.
[*] Include cases detected at the border and in the community
[#] Require medical care

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL MEASURES:

The following measures have been put in place in light of the outbreak:

1. A curfew is applied in all islands in the Shefa Province and in all of the other five provinces of Tafea, Malampa, Penama, Sanma and Torba from 6pm until 6am over the next 14 days. The curfew acts as a 'stay-at-home' order and is a key action during the pandemic with the goal of reducing COVID-19 transmission by reducing non-essential interactions between people from different households.
2. The curfew does not apply to:
    a. persons requiring emergency health services and persons assisting them to get emergency health services;
    b. essential services as defined as defined in the order and approved by the Minister; and
    c. persons engaged in activities under the national clusters that are being activated by the National Disaster Management Office on Efate and its offshore islands.
    d. persons or children requiring getting vaccination for COVID-19 and other vaccines.

OPERATIONS:

The National Health Emergency Operations Centre is activated and is meeting twice daily to manage and coordinate the response operations.

- **Surveillance and testing:** Twenty (20) new active cases have been reported, 14 in Shefa province and 6 new cases in Sanma province in the previous 24 hours. All Shefa cases are located in the Port Vila area. Testing clinic for COVID-19 at Vila central hospital was on reduced capacity on March 12 and closed on March 12. The National Surveillance and Response Unit reminds all clinicians and laboratories that reporting newly diagnosed cases of COVID-19 is required under the Public Health Act. If you do not know how to notify, please contact vnsu@vanuatu.gov.vu. Training for use and reporting on Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) have been conducted. Testing sites using rapid antigen tests have been expanded to public health facilities (2nd Lagon/Club Hippique as a mobile testing site, Imere HC, Saupia HC) and private health providers (Vanuatu Private Hospital, Novomedical, Medipole) in and around Efate.
- **Contact tracing and quarantine:** The focus for contact tracing teams is to interview all new cases and identify high risk contacts (defined as pregnant women, people with underlying conditions, unvaccinated people and people aged 55+ years). A contact tracing hub has been established in Port Vila that will provide support for all provinces.
- **Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE):** Risk communication and community engagement activities are ongoing. Mass multi-media campaigns are progressing on various platforms including on MoH daily 'live' update, television, social media, and radio. Social listening and rumour monitoring continues. The RCCE team is collaborating with various partners including the Shefa Provincial Government, Port Vila Municipal Council, Vanuatu Police Force, and other community stakeholders for community mobilisation in priority wards of Port Vila and covering Efate and its offshore islands from 14 March onwards. In addition, the team is collaborating with NDMO Communication & Community Engagement subcluster, and WASH cluster partners to support community mobilisation.
- **Community Isolation and Quarantine centers (CIQ):** Government-managed, community isolation and quarantine facilities are currently being established for the isolation of mild cases that are unable to isolate safely at home. Preparations are ongoing for supportive services and include, security, water, hygiene and sanitation, Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), food provision, transportation. Training of nurses has been conducted for monitoring of mild cases in CIQ (topics covered Infection and Prevention Control (IPC), swabbing, clinical monitoring, referral and reporting).
- **Case management and isolation:** A tent has been set-up as a triage and testing site for people presenting with flu-like symptoms at VCH. Community Isolation and Quarantine (CIQ) centres are currently being set up at the Korman Complex and soon ExFOL, for people with mild symptoms not requiring hospitalisation. In the meantime, confirmed cases with mild symptoms are advised to self-isolate at home. Total of six (6) cases currently hospitalised in VCH and of that, two (2) are critically ill requiring oxygen.
- **Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs):** National EMT Coordinating Cell (EMTCC) has been activated in Port Vila and the EOC and EMTCC has been activated at NPH. EMTCC will coordinate the deployment of national and international EMTs based on needs assessment and requests for assistance at provincial and national levels.

Daily calls are conducted with provinces. EMTs will assist for outbreak investigation and contract tracing, clinical management and referral of cases as needed based on local situation.

- **COVID-19 vaccination:** Vaccination has resumed on Thursday, 10th March 2022 at the National Convention Centre and is available from Monday to Friday. Additional vaccination sites are being set-up in Port Vila (Imere Health Center, Pango dispensary) and North-Efate (Saupia Health Centre) and will be operational on Monday 14th March. 2 mobile teams are available to cover Port Vila municipality. Vaccination is ongoing in all provinces. The elderly (55 years and over), and people 35 years and over with known underlying medical conditions, are most at risk of severe disease and hospitalization and are strongly advised to get vaccinated with all recommended doses and with a booster if they are eligible.
- **Partners support:** MOH and WHO are jointly coordinating development partners support, including international staff surge support.
    - HR surge support are being offered by development partners (Australia, NZ, SPC and WHO) in the areas of epidemiology, clinical care, laboratory and logistics
    - 10,000 AZ vaccines arrived on March 7 with the support from Australia
    - 60 oxygen concentrators and PPEs arrived on March 7 with the support from Australia
    - 13,000 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits arrived on March 8 with the support from Ausralia
    - 5000 PCR testing kits and swabs arrived on March 8 from WHO
    - 9000 surgical masks arrived on March 9 from WHO.
    - Ministry of Youth and Sports, Red Cross and other partners assist setting up the community isolation center

- **Provincial update:**

PCR, Rapid Antigen Tests, swabs and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) have been sent to the provinces to allow testing of suspected cases and of contacts as required. This will allow proper monitoring of the situation in all 6 provinces of Vanuatu. Needs assessment is being conducted to identify any support required.
Sanma province: No cases in hospital. 6 new cases have been reported on Santo island, Sanma province. Investigation and contact tracing ongoing.
Malampa province: Reports of travel of contacts of cases from Port Vila. Investigation ongoing.
Penama province: Province on lockdown following report of travel of contacts of cases from Port Vila
Tafea province: Reports of travel of contacts of cases from Port Vila. Investigation ongoing.
Torba province: No reports of travel or of cases.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Everyone is urged to refer only to official information sources and to avoid spreading misinformation and rumours. Further information and updates are made available by the Ministry of Health on the dedicated COVID-19 website at www.covid19.gov.vu, the Health Promotion Unit Facebook page, and by calling the Health Information Hotline on 119.

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Approved at: 14 March 2022, 12:00pm

** The frequency of Ministry of Health COVID-19 Situation Reports will depend on the evolving situation.*