World Health Organization

Update on SARS-COV-2 and Omicron VOC

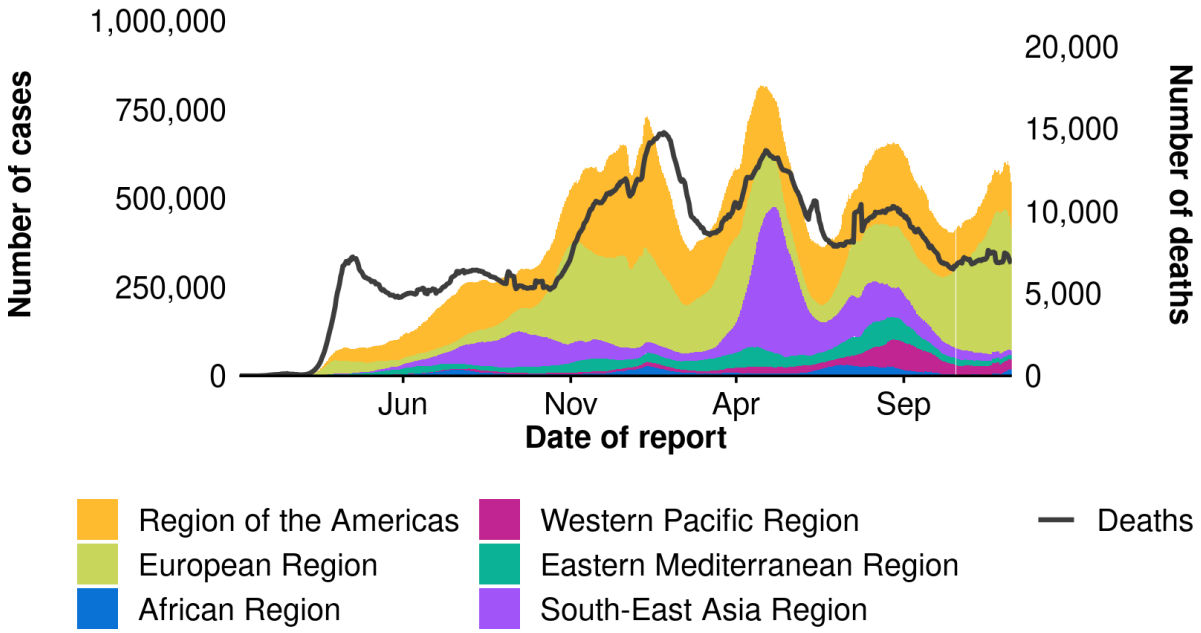
9 December 2021

ACT Accelerator Facilitation Council

Global Situation

(as of 8 December 10H CET)

- **Cumulative:**
  - 266,504,411 confirmed cases.
  - 5,268,849 deaths.



data smoothed with 7-day moving average

Countries with the highest number of new cases in previous 24 hours

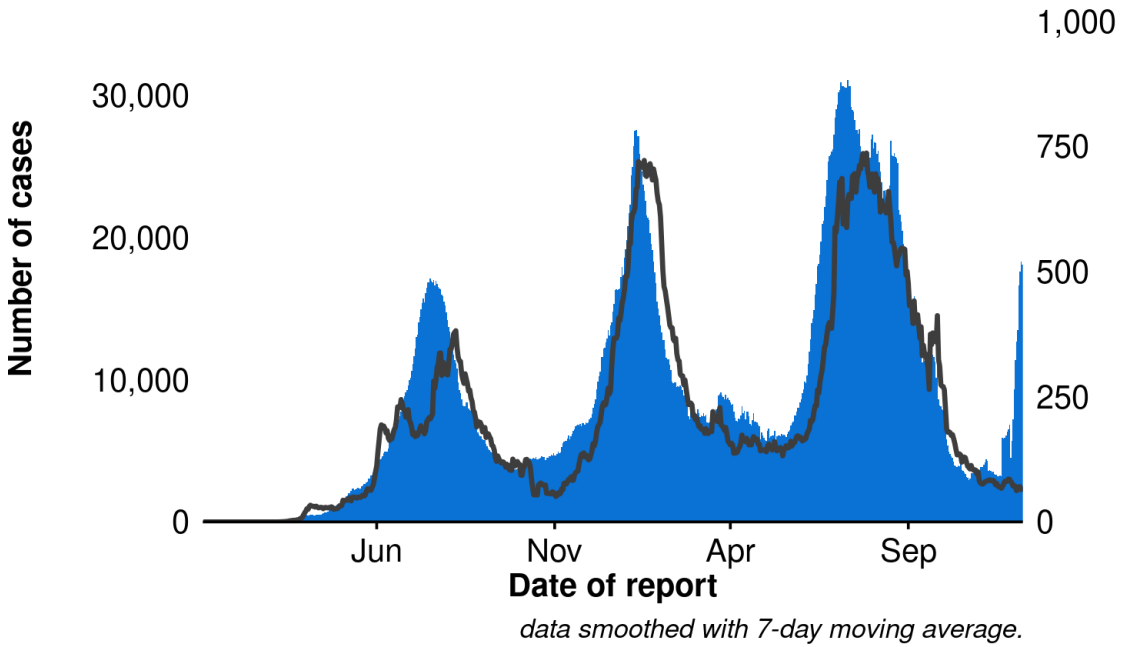
Country	New Cases	Total Cases	New Deaths	Total Deaths
United States of America	190,353	48,982,584	1,343	783,433
Germany	69,601	6,291,621	527	104,047
France	58,852	7,749,620	171	117,404
United Kingdom	45,102	10,560,345	180	145,826
Russian Federation	30,752	9,895,597	1,179	284,823
Poland	28,549	3,732,589	591	86,796
Turkey	22,687	8,943,837	198	78,215
Czechia	19,546	2,282,212	132	34,034
Netherlands	18,017	2,790,830	68	19,770
Italy	15,742	5,134,318	99	134,386

Trend line shown for the past 12 months

WHO African Region

(as of 8 December 10H CET)

- **Previous 24 hours:**
  - 29,210 new confirmed cases from 29 countries.
  - 143 new deaths from 16 countries.
  - 4.2% of new global cases and 1.9% of new global deaths
- **Cumulative:**
  - 6,408,551 confirmed cases.
  - 153,503 deaths.



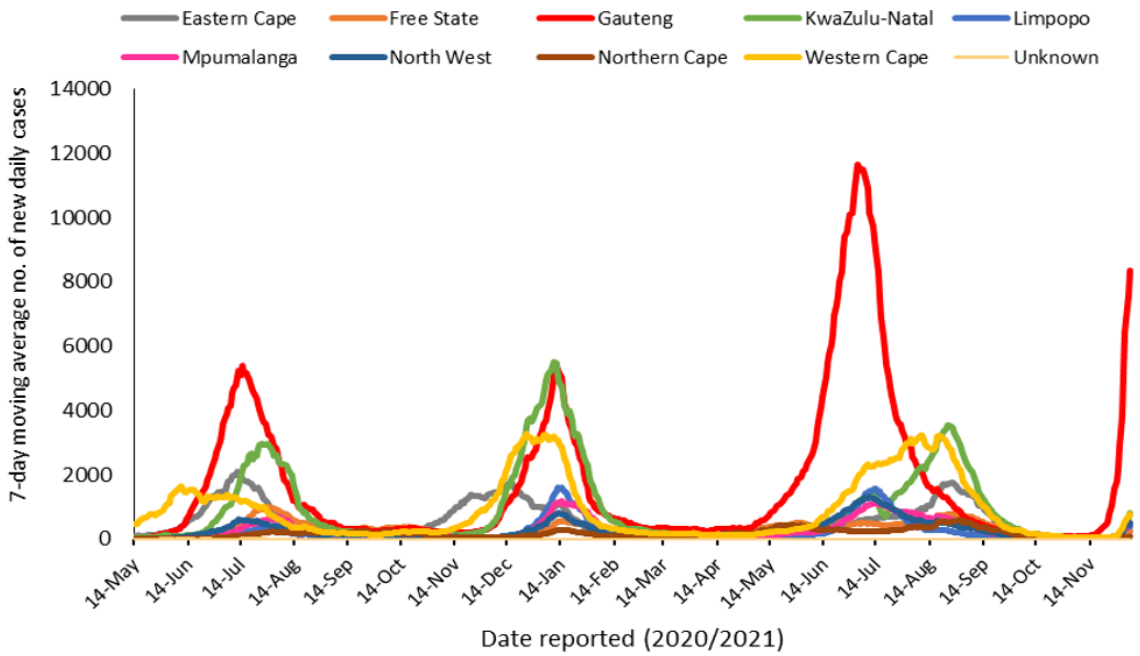
data smoothed with 7-day moving average.

Countries with the highest number of new cases in previous 24 hours

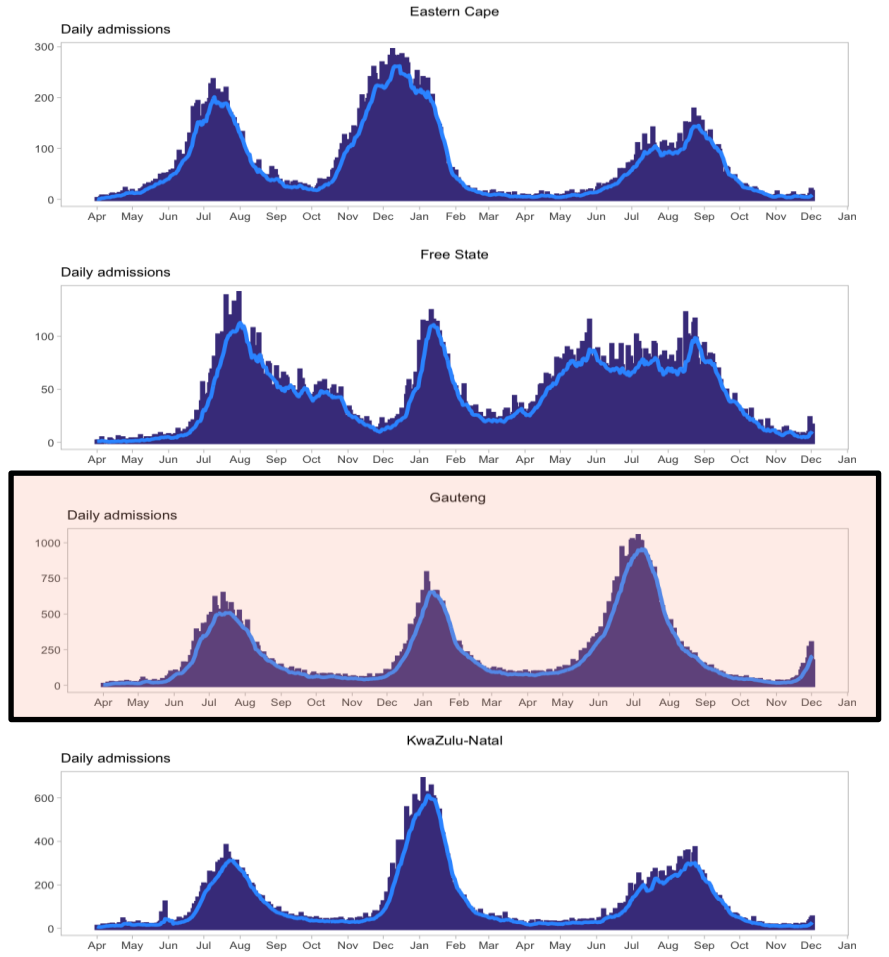
Country	New Cases	Total Cases	New Deaths	Total Deaths
South Africa	13,147	3,051,222	27	90,002
Zimbabwe	6,586	145,632	8	4,718
Mauritius	6,194	62,500	58	652
Eswatini	507	48,358	0	1,248
Madagascar	470	44,800	5	972
Namibia	430	129,938	1	3,574
Cameroon	401	107,549	19	1,823
Burkina Faso	334	16,334	4	290
Algeria	197	211,859	3	6,114
Mali	141	18,113	1	619

Trend line shown for the past 12 months

Trends of SARS-COV-2 cases and hospitalizations South Africa

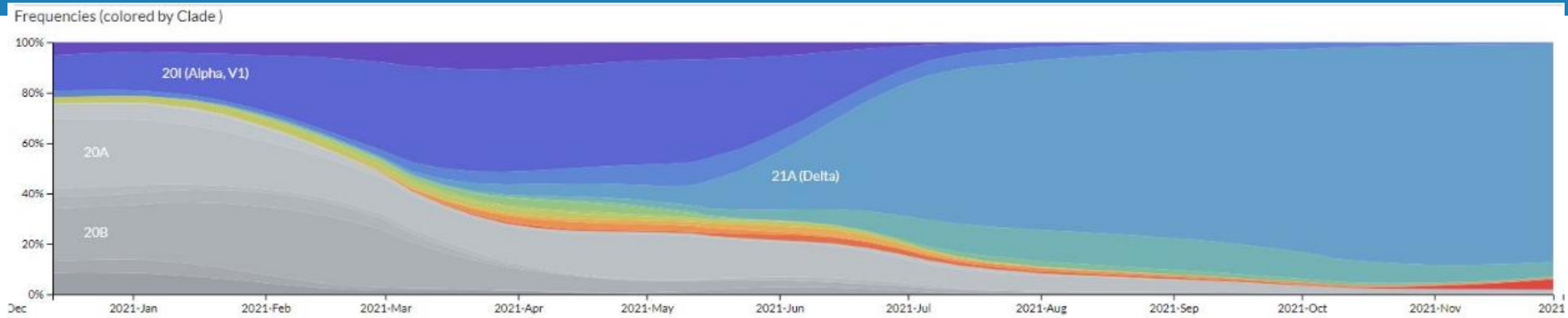


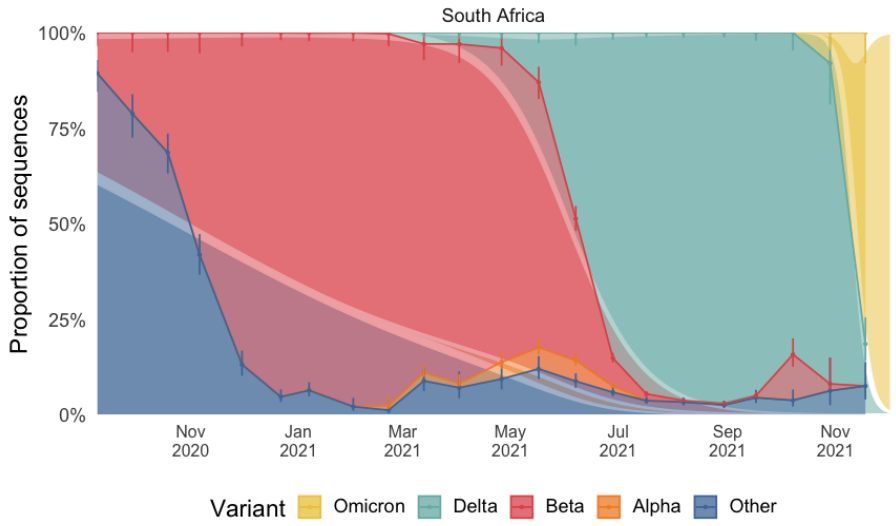
7-day moving average number of new cases by province and date of reporting, 12 April 2020 to 06 Dec 2021, South Africa
Courtesy of NICD South Africa

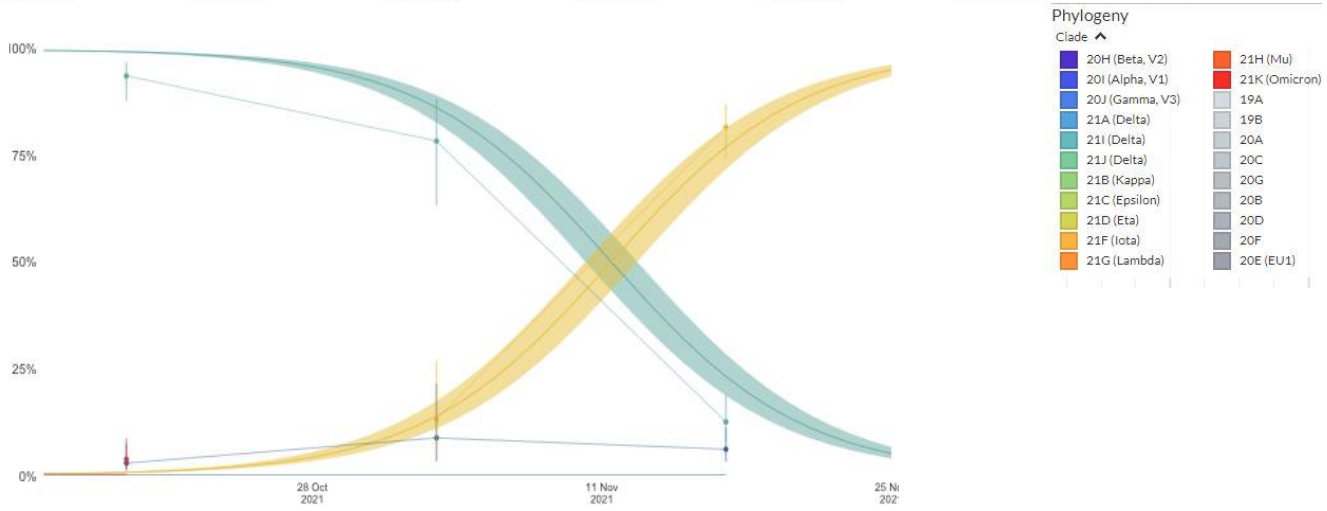


Increase in hospitalisations most prominent in Gauteng – centre of Omicron outbreak

Proportion of SARS-CoV-2 VOCs variants over time: Globally and South Africa







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Source: Nextstrain based on GISAID data nextstrain.org/neov/global

Under an IMST, WHO is assessing the threat of VOCs (including omicron)

3 key properties of a variant are likely to influence the overall threat from it.

TAG for Virus Evolution

is assessing its effect on transmission, disease severity, vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics, and the effectiveness of PHSMs

WG for Clinical Management Networks

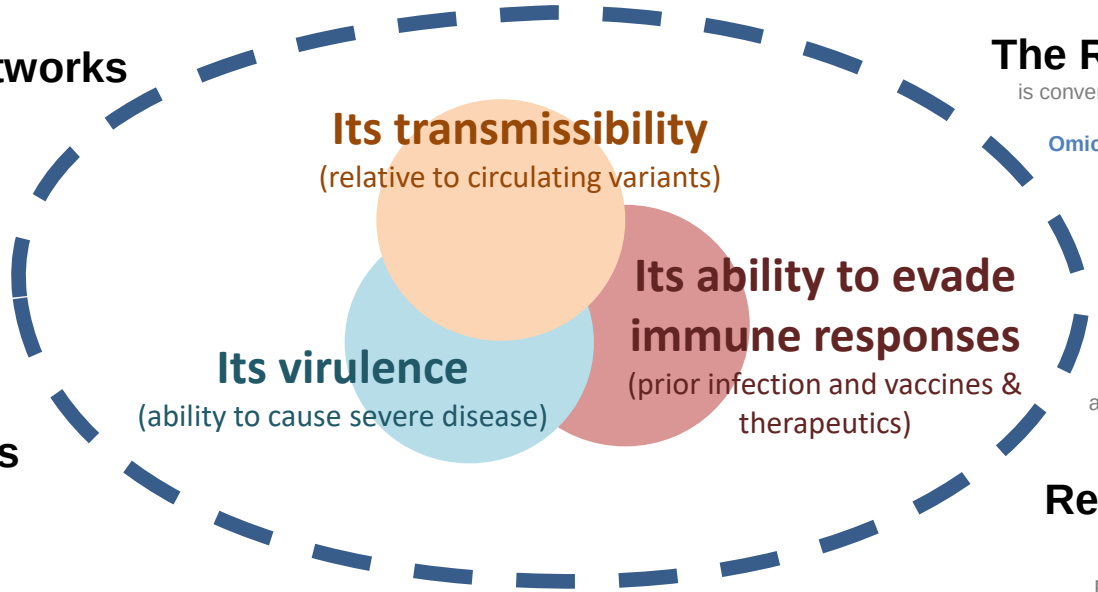
is assessing impacts of VOCs on current vaccines and
WHO Global Clinical Platform for COVID

The Joint Advisory Group on Therapeutics Prioritization

is analyzing the possible effects on treatment of hospitalized patients.

WG on outpatient platform trials

is reviewing trial designs and challenges



The R&D Blueprint for Epidemics

is convening researchers to identify knowledge gaps, and studies needed to answer the most pressing questions.
Omicron variant assays & animal models study tracker

The WG on vaccines TPPs

is reviewing current desirable and minimum criteria for vaccines.

WHO BioHub system

a reliable, safe, and transparent mechanism to voluntarily share novel biological materials

Regulatory convergence via ICMRA

For evaluation of variant specific vaccines

TAG for COVID-19 Vaccine Composition

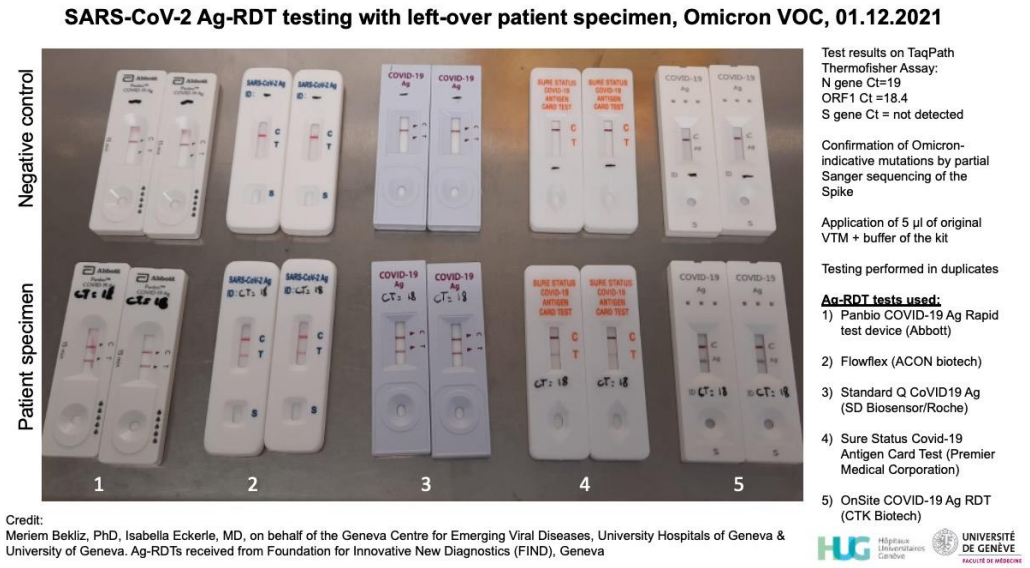
is assessing impacts of VOCs on current vaccines and determining whether changes to the composition of vaccines are needed.

SAGE for vaccines

is reviewing data to develop evidence based recommendations on the vaccination policies and target populations.

Thousands of researchers around the world are contributing their data and expertise to the deliberations

Omicron implications for diagnostics and therapeutics

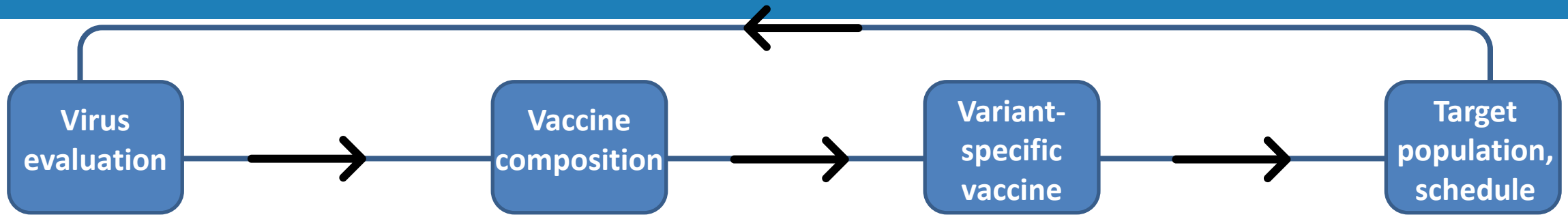


- PCR assays (with multiple gene targets) continue to detect SARS-CoV-2 infection, including Omicron
- Antigen-detection tests (Ag-RDTs) are expected to continue to detect SARS-CoV-2 infection, including Omicron

- Focus initial research efforts on:
  - antigen binding and virus neutralization by antiviral monoclonal antibodies
  - characterization of the COVID-19 phenotype caused by infection with Omicron variant

Therapeutic	Experiment Type				
	In vitro			In vivo	
	Antiviral assessment	Live virus neutralization	Binding IgG	mAb efficacy	Therapeutic efficacy
Neutralizing monoclonal Antibody		x	x	x	
Antivirals	x				x

From VOC designation to policy recommendations for variant specific vaccines



Monitoring & surveillance

TAG-VE

- Which variants warrant further investigation
- Defines VOIs or VOCs
- Assess impact on interventions & tools

Assess impact of VOCs

TAG-COVAC

- Determine whether changes to vaccine composition are needed

Evaluates variant-specific vaccine

EUL/PQ

- Determine whether evidence on modified vaccine permits regulatory approval

Provides policy recommendations

SAGE

- Define goals of vaccination, target populations and vaccine schedules

Define priority research agenda

R&D Blueprint Expert Groups

- Live critical appraisal of emerging data
- Design of methods for evaluation of variant specific vaccines (pre-clinical & clinical

Priorities

- Coordinated characterization, risk assessment and required research and innovation leading to evidence-based decision-making and policy formation
- Intensify efforts to drive down/keep down transmission – strengthen PHSM
- Accelerating higher, verified COVID-19 vaccines coverage, among the most vulnerable populations and HCWs, supported by strong risk communication and community engagement
- Supporting all countries to enhance clinical pathways, surveillance and laboratory systems including genomic sequencing, with a particular focus on LMICs

World Health Organization
Thank you
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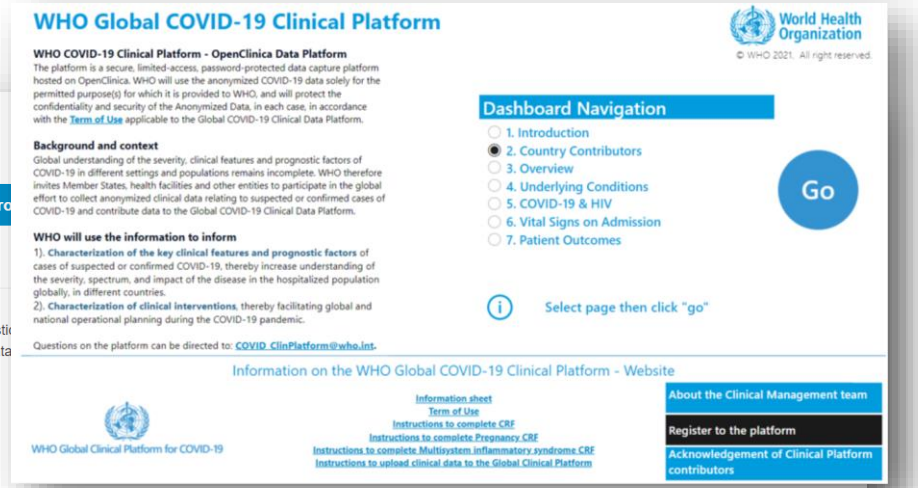
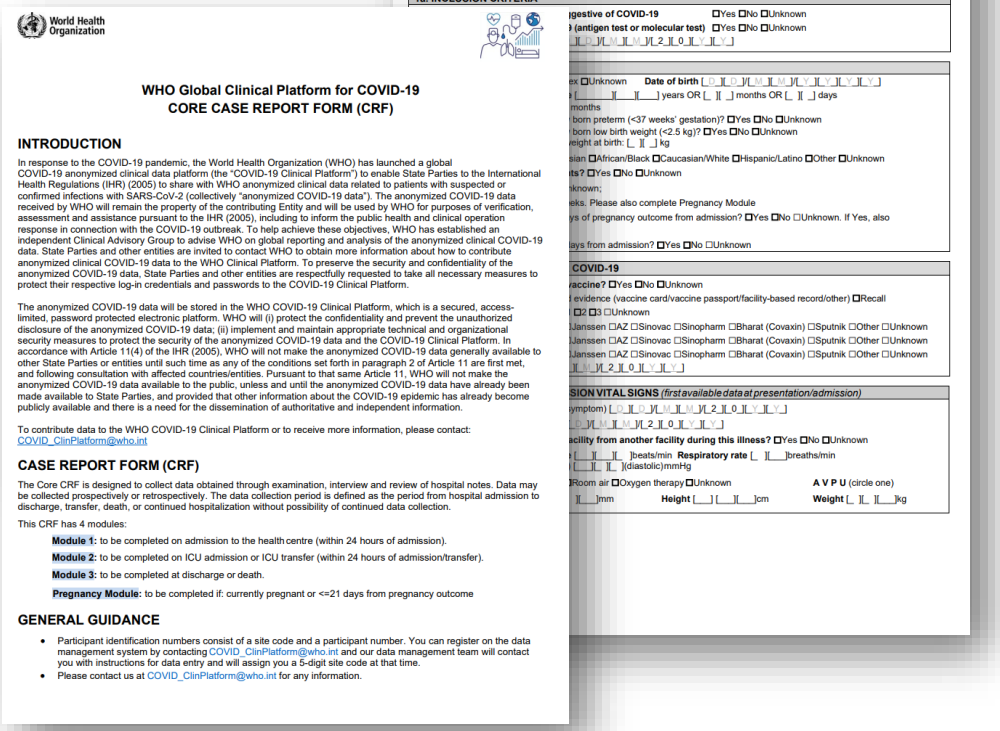
B.1.1.529 Variant of Concern: Omicron

Clinical Data Platform - for severity monitoring CRF UPDATED

The WHO Global Clinical Platform for COVID-19

COVID_ClinPlatform@who.int





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