

# Philippines

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

### Situation Report #123

13 Mar 2023

Data reported by the Department of Health on 12 Mar 2023



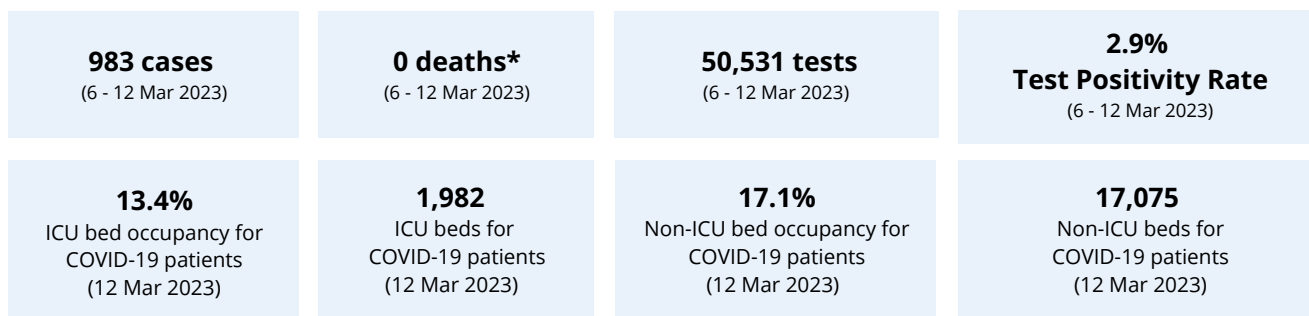
Photo credit: DOH Philippines



Please see the Philippines Department of Health (DOH) [Daily Case Bulletins](#) and [COVID-19 Tracker](#) for further information.

## Summary of the epidemiological situation in Philippines<sup>1</sup>

### Key numbers



\*Obtained from FASSSTER COVID-19 death tally as of 13 Mar 2023

### COVID-19 cases

Following a decrease in the number of reported COVID-19 cases on 13 - 26 Feb, two weeks of increasing trend were observed; 27 Feb - 5 Mar 2023, 913 cases (0.8 case per 100,000 population) and 6 - 12 Mar, 983 cases were reported (0.9 case per 100,000 population).

From 6 - 12 Mar, the three regions with highest case counts were, National Capital Region reporting 251 cases, Region XI: Davao Region reporting 151 cases, and Region XII: SOCCSKSARGEN reporting 105 cases.

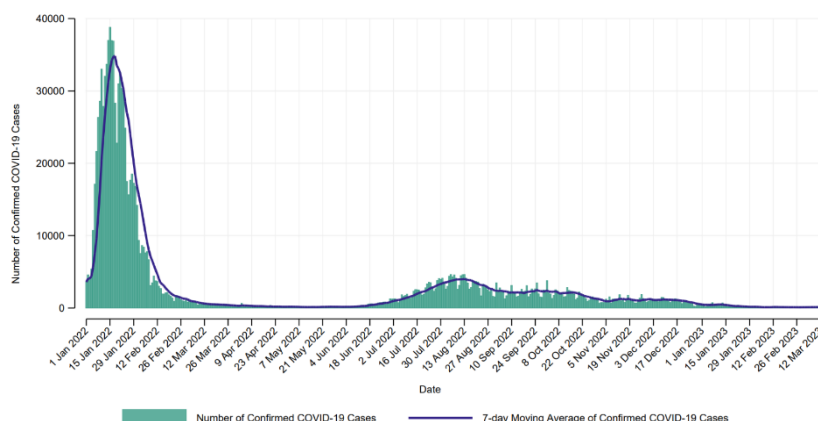


Figure 1. Daily reported COVID-19 cases in the Philippines (1 Jan 2022 - 12 Mar 2023)

<sup>1</sup>Weekly case counts were obtained from FASSSTER COVID-19 PROJECT

## Healthcare utilization

From 27 Feb - 12 Mar 2023, the daily number (7-day average) of COVID-19 occupied ICU beds (Figure 2) and the number of utilized COVID-19 dedicated mechanical ventilators (7-day average) were both stable.

The number of ICU beds occupied per week are as follows: 27 Feb - 5 Mar (289 beds), and 6 - 12 Mar (291 beds). The ICU utilization as of 12 Mar 2023 is 13.4%. The number of COVID-19 dedicated mechanical ventilators utilized per week are as follows: 27 Feb - 5 Mar (179 ventilators), and 6 - 12 Mar (182 ventilators). As of 12 Mar 2023, 157 ventilators were utilized.

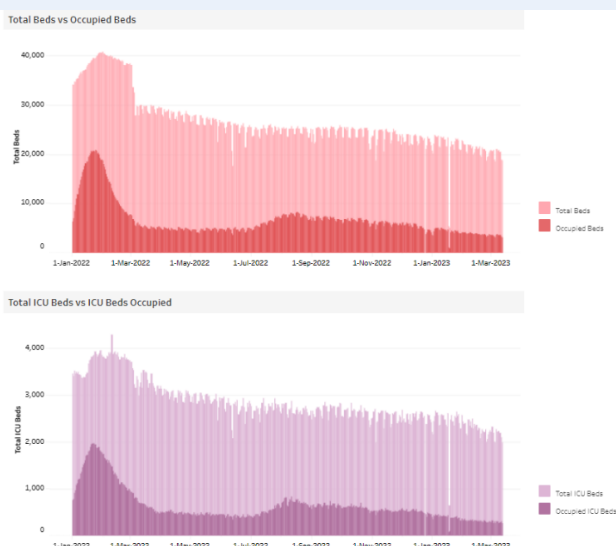


Figure 2. Total bed and ICU bed distribution over time stratified by occupancy (1 Jan 2022 - 12 Mar 2023)

## COVID-19 deaths

As of 12 Mar 2023, 66,210 COVID-19 related deaths have been reported in Philippines since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 3). No deaths were reported from 6 - 12 Mar 2023.

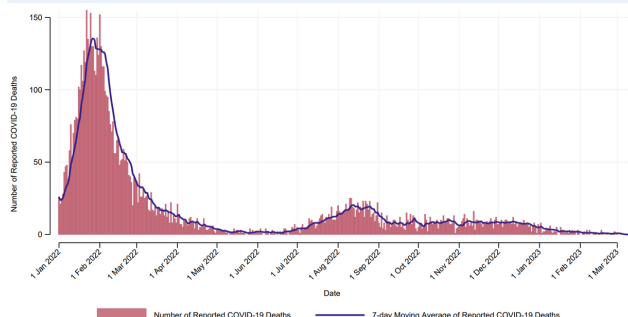


Figure 3. Daily number of COVID-19 deaths in the Philippines by date of death (1 Jan 2022 - 12 Mar 2023)

## Laboratory: testing rates, positivity rates and genomic surveillance

From 9 Jan - 12 Mar 2023, the number of RT-PCR tests conducted continued to decline.

On 6 - 12 Mar, 50,531 tests were conducted; 27 Feb - 5 Mar: 56,750 tests; 20 - 26 Feb, 53,386 tests were conducted; 13 - 19 Feb: 62,544 tests; 6 - 12 Feb: 64,520 tests; 30 Jan - 5 Feb: 67,803 tests; 23 - 29 Jan, 70,482 tests; 16 - 22 Jan: 76,041 tests; and on 9-15 Jan: 78,251 tests.

For the test positivity rates, an increase was observed from 20 Feb - 12 Mar 2023. The test positivity rate on 6 - 12 Mar (2.9%) was 16.0% higher than the previous week (2.5%). The test positivity rate recorded on 20 - 26 Feb was 2.1%.

Of the 761 samples sequenced by UP-PGC and reported on 27 February: 468 (61.5%) were classified as BA.2.3.20, 149 (19.6%) were XBB (including three cases of XBB.1.5), 33 (4.3%) were other Omicron sublineages, nine (1.2%) were XBC, eight (1.1%) were BA.5 (including six cases of BQ.1), and four (0.5%) were BN.1 (reported under BA.2.75).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> LATEST COVID-19 BIOSURVEILLANCE REPORT | Department of Health website (doh.gov.ph)

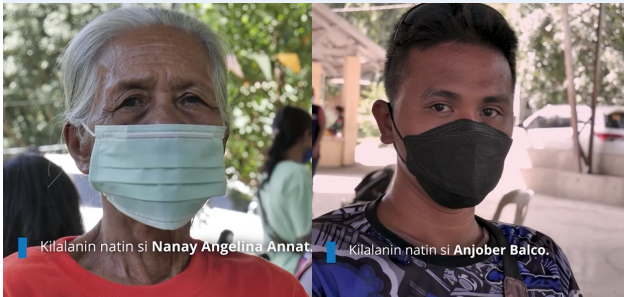
## Strategic approach to COVID-19 Prevention, Detection and Control

### Risk Communications

WHO Philippines published settings-based RCCE messages on COVID-19 for safe schools and safe transport.



WHO Philippines re-published the #BakunadoAko video series which featured the stories of Filipino citizens getting their COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, and inviting others to do the same.



Kilalanin natin si Nanay Angelina Annat.

Kilalanin natin si Anjober Balco.



Kilalanin natin si Tatay Ricky Zamora.

WHO Philippines re-published messages on taking care of our mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.



“Makakatulong ang regular na pakikipag-usap sa mga mahal sa buhay sa ating mental health. Kumustahin sila gamit ang tawag, chat o video call.”

“Ang pagkakaroon ng active lifestyle ay nakakatulong sa mental health. Mag-ehersisyo at kumain ng masusustansyang pagkain para mapanatili ito.”

WHO Philippines re-published locally produced videos on COVID-19 vaccine promotion and COVID-19 home-based recovery.

Walong hakbang tungo sa ligtas na **home-based recovery** para sa COVID-19



Kaya naman napakahalagang iwasan nating dumagdag pa sa kanilang pasakit. 🧡

Paano nga ba ako makakatulong? 🤔

Mapoprotektahan mo ang iyong sarili at kapwa kapag kumpleto ang iyong bakuna.

## Partner Coordination

### Updates from USAID

#### USAID Breakthrough ACTION

##### 1. Project *Batibot*

USAID Breakthrough ACTION talks to moms about COVID-19 vaccines for children. Since the COVID-19 vaccines became available for children ages 5-11 in February 2022, only half of the target pediatric population has been vaccinated. To address this, USAID Breakthrough ACTION (BA) partnered with three online communities for moms to prompt discussion around COVID-19 vaccines.



Breakthrough ACTION and partners created social media posts and an online talk show that addresses myths, misconceptions and misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines.



The online talk show was hosted by a famous celebrity mom, Pauleen Luna-Sotto, together with Dr Anna Ong-Lim, Chief of Infectious and Tropical Disease Section of the Philippine General Hospital, Dr Maricar Santos, Medical Officer IV of the Department of Health, and the three moms who lead the partner communities.

During the talk show, the medical experts talked about how vaccines work and why getting vaccinated is important especially for immunocompromised children. Pauleen, mommy GL, mommy Erika, and mommy Xhieca talked about their personal experiences when having their children vaccinated and the concerns of their fellow moms and discussed how to address those concerns.

The talk show reached more than 3,500 moms across all three communities and will reach more parents as partners share the [video](#).

## 2. I Choose *KwentoSerye*

USAID Breakthrough ACTION launches KwentoSerye program for teens in the Philippines. KwentoSerye is an online conversation series with teens and for teens. It aims to be a safe space for teens to talk about their health and well-being. The first two episodes that premiered on the [I Choose Facebook page](#) focused on the teens' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.



The conversations revolved around how teens felt during the lockdown and when the COVID-19 vaccines for them were finally available. The teens talked about how the pandemic has affected their mental health as well. A mental health expert from InTouch Community Services was invited to share tips on how the teens can take care of their mental health.

The *KwentoSerye* encourages teens to be more proactive in caring for their health by getting vaccinated against COVID-19, practicing self-care exercises, and seeking help when needed. Resources such as the [mental health booklet for teens](#), the [Lusog-lsip app and website](#) and helplines were shown in the videos too.