What recent evidence do we have that omicron is evading immunity and what are the implications?

Meeting objectives

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Omicron is now the dominant global circulating variant of SARS-CoV-2

At our last meeting in December, Omicron was beginning to displace Delta as the main circulating VoC. Now, it is the dominant variant in all parts of the world.
There is still limited data on the effectiveness of the currently available vaccines against Omicron. However, there is clear and increasing evidence for lower VE from primary vaccination regimens against Omicron compared to earlier variants; but with booster doses increasing VE VE remains higher against severe disease than against infection or symptomatic disease.

Source: View-Hub by IVAC https://view-hub.org/resources
Key findings and research priorities identified at the Dec 15th meeting

- Reduced neutralization was observed across multiple assays and vaccines against Omicron vs ancestral virus and previous VOCs
- Booster or additional exposure via infection increased neutralization although duration of the boosting effect was unclear
- CD4 and CD8 T cell responses to vaccines and previous infection remain largely intact against variants including omicron
- Increase standardization of assays and readouts
- Larger Studies
- Animal studies
- Sharing of reagents, e.g. convalescent omicron serum
- Omicron-specific responses to more vaccines
- Connection of lab results to clinical outcomes
- More information about mechanisms of protection especially vs. severe disease
- More epidemiological data – transmission, severity, VE
Goals of the meeting

Present and review the available evidence

Critically appraise the data

Outline research priorities for the omicron variant response. This will include discussion of deployment of current vaccines and the potential utility of Omicron-specific vaccines.
Upcoming meetings

WHO Global consultation: Developing a framework for evaluating new COVID-19 vaccines  Feb 23rd 1300-1930 CET

WHO COVID-19 Global research and innovation forum Feb 24th-25th 1300-1900 CET