

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

28 October 2021
WHO Thailand Weekly
Situation Update
No. 207

Based on data as reported by the CCSA

DAILY AVERAGE (22-28 October)



8,900 new cases



9,556 people recovered



658,890 vaccinations



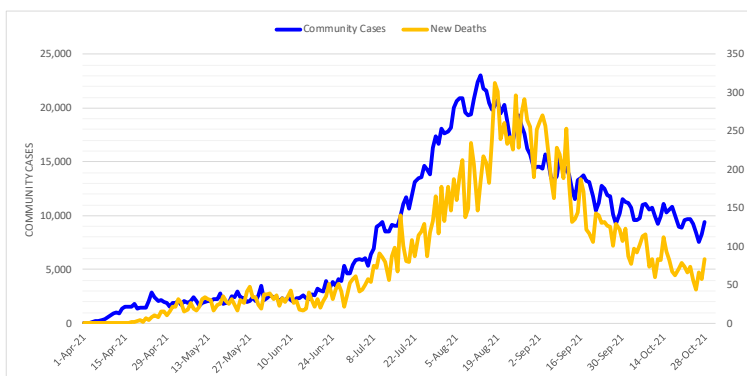
64 deaths

1,884,973 total confirmed cases

19,006 total deaths

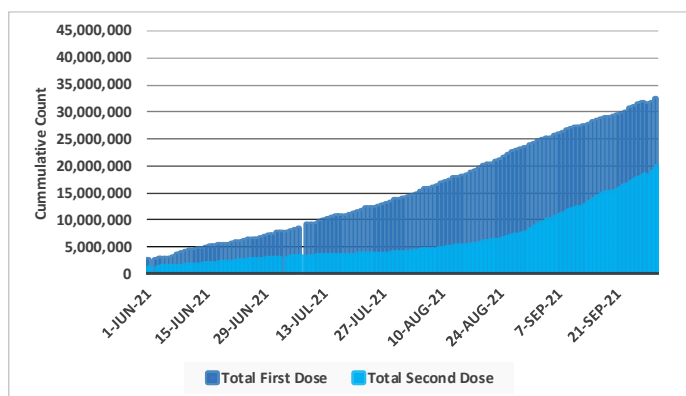
WEEKLY TRENDS

- The average number of new community acquired cases reported per week continues to decrease. However daily case counts have started to increase recently, climbing by more than 2,000 compared to two days ago.
- Average community cases per day have dropped below 9,000 for the first time since early June, though they remain high; nearly five times above the third wave average of 1,818 per day between April and June.
- The number of deaths continues to decrease, dropping by 16% over the previous week.
- Severe cases (decreasing by 13%, 6% last week) and ventilated cases (13%, 6% previously) have both doubled their rate of decrease, with a break from the previous few weeks of stable daily counts. However, these numbers remain high.



VACCINATIONS

- Over 41 million people have now received a first vaccination dose, representing 81% of the Government target.
- Almost 29.5 million people have received a second dose, representing 58% of the Government target. This is a 3.3% increase and a slowing down from the 5% increase from the previous week.
- Second-dose vaccination in vulnerable groups is greater than 50%, though much lower (10% as of 17 October) for pregnant women.



SITUATION ANALYSIS

- Although the past two days has seen an increase in the number of confirmed and probable cases—associated with an overall small increase in total bed occupancy, the number of severe and ventilated cases have continued to decrease.
- Current levels of severe cases, ventilated cases and deaths are all less than 50% of the average numbers that were seen at the peak in August 2021.
- However, COVID infections remain very widespread and absolute case numbers remain high, reflecting significant transmission in communities. There is also incomplete information about the number of people self-testing positive with the antigen test kits that are now widely available, making the situation more difficult to accurately assess.
- Although case numbers in Bangkok and the surrounding Metropolitan area are lower than for several months, the Ministry of Public Health is now closely monitoring a number of 'watch list' Provinces reporting active outbreaks, including Tak, Ratchaburi, Chantaburi, Rayong, Nakhon Ratchasima, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala, and Songkhla.
- Public Health officers are working hard to accelerate vaccination coverage in these provinces and are tasked with providing regular reports to Ministry of Public Health Emergency Operations Centre.
- With plans to adjust Public Health and Social Measures imminent, it remains vitally important that members of the public continue to adhere to the full range of protective measures that we know will break chains of transmission.

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a bent elbow. Wash hands after.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth.
- Keep 1m distance away from others.



EXPLAINER:

- AY.4.2 variant of COVID-19
- Combating infodemics

Combating Infodemics

- "We're not just fighting an epidemic; we're fighting an infodemic" is a well known quote from WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom. An infodemic is an excessive amount of information about a problem, making it difficult to identify a solution.
- During a health emergency like this pandemic, an infodemic can drown out reliable information and allow rumours to spread more quickly, impeding an effective public health response.
- Infodemics make it difficult to recognise accurate and reliable information that tells people what preventative actions they should take. Some information even promotes stigma, discrimination or violence. Therefore, we all have an important role to play in sharing trustworthy information and reducing disinformation.
 - ◊ Look for facts and evidence. Be critical when receiving information - assess and make a judgement about the accuracy and reliability of the source and compare with other sources.
 - ◊ Choose carefully. Only share content from trusted sources.
 - ◊ Be a good example. Correct or call out people in your social networks when they post something untrue. Then, refer them to verified content and expert organisations for better information.
 - ◊ Consider spending less time online. Only seek the latest information at specific times of the day, just once or twice a day if needed. This also helps to maintain good physical and mental health.
- By doing this, we can combat disinformation and misinformation and turn the infodemic into a positive information experience that promotes evidence, facts and science.

COVID-19 Virus Evolution: the AY.4.2 variant

- In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has been driven by new SARS-CoV-2 virus variants, with the Delta variant of concern (VOC) now dominating globally as well as here in Thailand.
- It is the nature of all viruses to continually mutate, and this includes existing COVID strains. The WHO is currently tracking more than 20 variants of the Delta strain.
- One strain of the Delta variant that was identified in the United Kingdom, labelled as 'AY.4.2' and sometimes referred to as 'Delta Plus', has gained media attention and is being found in more countries.
- Currently AY.4.2 has been identified in 42 countries. Despite some reports earlier this week, it has not yet been found in

Should we be concerned over the AY.4.2 variant?



Not yet. Although AY.4.2 has been found in some countries, it hasn't been identified in Thailand. It's also not currently thought to be more transmissible, cause more severe illness or evade current vaccines.

Thailand. However, if this variant continues to spread globally, it is possible it will eventually be found in Thailand, as has occurred with the Alpha, Beta and Delta VOC's.

- AY.4.2 is not yet classified as a VOC that is distinct from other Delta strains because it has not yet been shown to be more transmissible, cause more severe disease or increased mortality. It has also not been shown to evade our immune system, and there is no evidence that current vaccines will be less effective in protecting against infections caused by it. It is simply being found with greater frequency in the countries that have reported it, and in more countries globally.
- As more is learned about AY.4.2 its importance for public health will be better understood. What it does remind us though, is that the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over and new mutations that could potentially be of concern can emerge at any time.
- Fortunately, as of now, existing public health and social measures - including vaccination - are effective against all COVID-19 strains including AY.4.2.



Click on the image to watch Dr Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO technical lead for COVID, discuss the AY.4.2 variant of COVID-19

USEFUL LINKS

- The Thailand COVID19 situation report is available in Thai and English, please [visit](#)
- For regular updates on WHO's response in Thailand, please [visit](#)
- For global figures and technical advice from WHO, please [visit](#)

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