

South African Health Review

2021

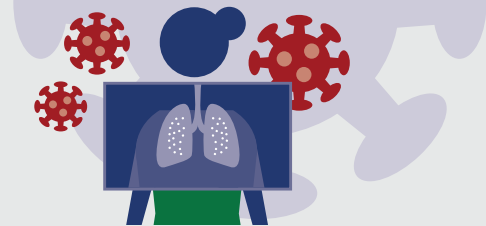


HEALTH
SYSTEMS
TRUST



THE PANDEMIC HAS COMPROMISED YEARS OF PROGRESS IN PROVIDING TB SERVICES

Disruptions due to COVID-19 have caused a decrease in testing and treatment.



TREATMENT



TB treatment dropped significantly after the first lockdown in March 2020 and again during the peak of the second wave.

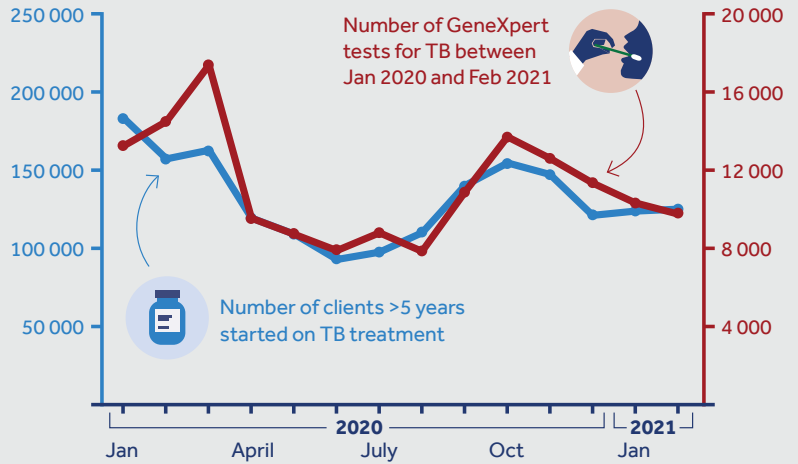
TESTING



Level 5 restrictions resulted in a 48% average weekly decrease in TB GeneXpert testing and a 33% decrease in the number of positive TB diagnoses.



The impact of COVID-19 on TB must be measured so that steps can be taken to reverse any setbacks.



COVID-19 HAS HAD A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON HIV TESTING AND ANTIRETROVIRAL TREATMENT (ART) COUNTRYWIDE

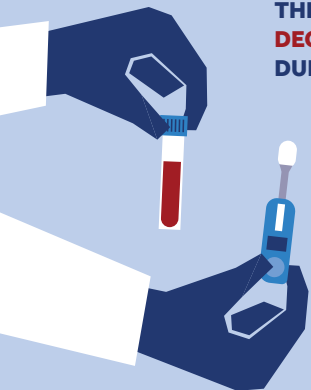


Initiation of ART was heavily affected during the 2020 lockdown. There was also a dramatic decrease in patients remaining on ART at the end of each month, with only a modest recovery thereafter.



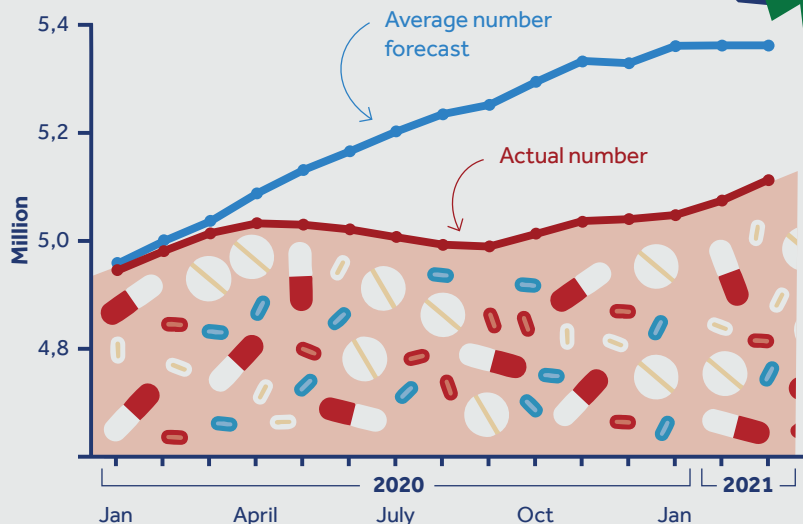
THE NUMBER OF HIV TESTS DECREASED DRAMATICALLY DURING LOCKDOWN.

Between March and December 2020 **3.4 million** fewer tests were conducted in the public health system than in the same period in 2019.



Tracking disruptions to HIV testing and treatment is vital in order to measure and counteract future disturbances.

NATIONAL ART CLIENTS REMAINING ON ART AT THE END OF EACH MONTH

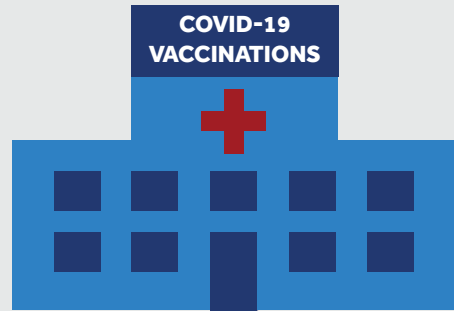
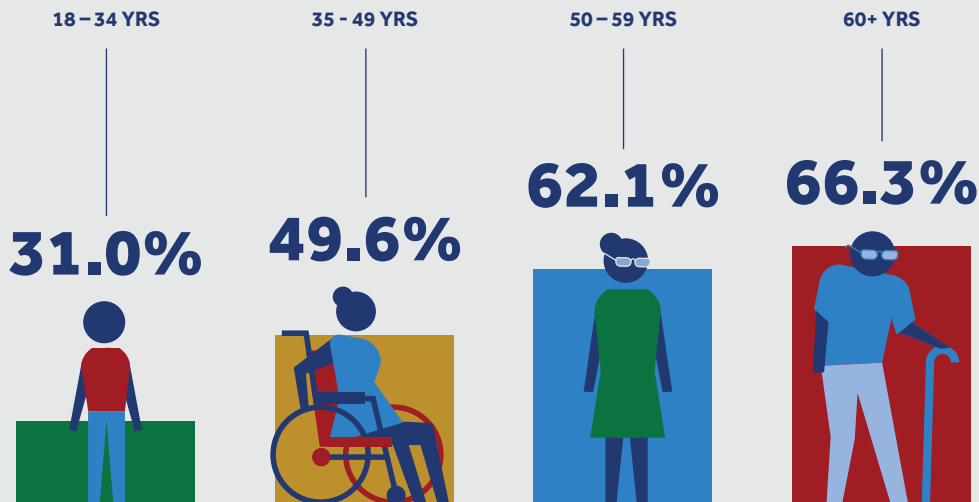




VACCINE HESITANCY IS A STUMBLING BLOCK IN THE ROLL-OUT OF VACCINATIONS

As of 6 January 2022, only 39.5% of the adult population were fully vaccinated, with the largest number of the unvaccinated being in the 18-34-year age group.

INDIVIDUALS VACCINATED (% OF THE ADULT POPULATION) ACROSS AGE GROUPS



WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES HAS DECREASED DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIODS



ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTIVES

In all provinces apart from Limpopo, a reduction in the number of contraceptives supplied was noted.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a 60% increase in the number of children born to teenage mothers.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

School closures and the level 5 national lockdown resulted in an increase in cases of gender-based violence country-wide.

ANTENATAL VISITS

A reduction in the number of antenatal visits before 20 weeks' gestation in some provinces was demonstrated.

CHILD MARRIAGE

School closures have been cited as a cause of the spike in child marriage.

INSTITUTIONAL MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (iMMR)

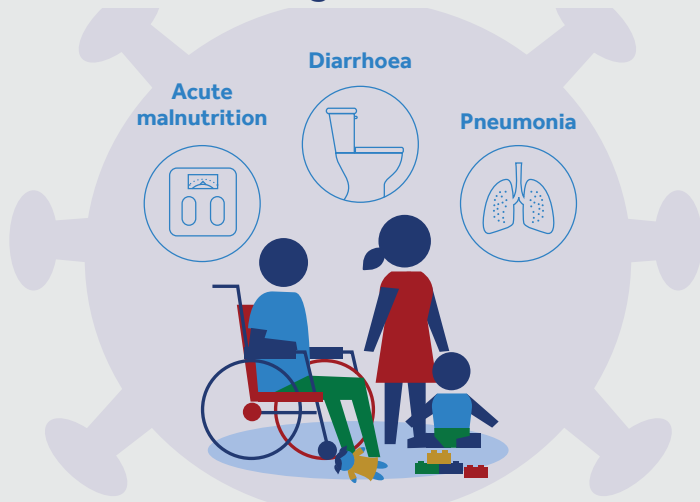
The ratio dropped below 100 per 100 000 live births for the first time in 2019; however it has now increased from 88 in 2019/20 to 120 in 2020/21.





THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD HEALTH IS ANTICIPATED TO BE SIGNIFICANT

During the pandemic, case fatality rates for children under 5 years showed concerning increases for:

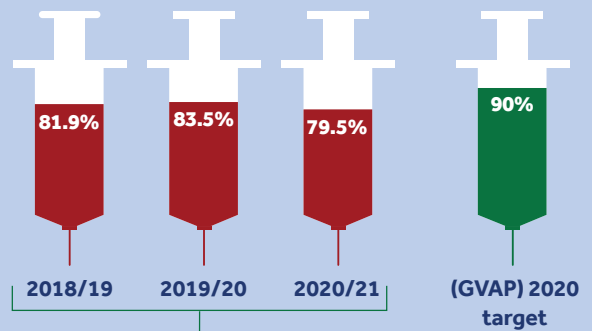


This may be attributed to:

- late presentation to health facilities
- resource diversion
- undiagnosed COVID-19 in children
- less care-seeking, resulting in a greater proportion of serious cases presenting

Even before COVID-19 there were notable gaps in immunisation coverage, which worsened during the pandemic.

SOUTH AFRICA IMMUNISATION UNDER 1 YEAR COVERAGE



SA's coverage has remained well below the Global Vaccine Action Plan 2020 target of 90%.



PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (PHC) UTILISATION DROPPED SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



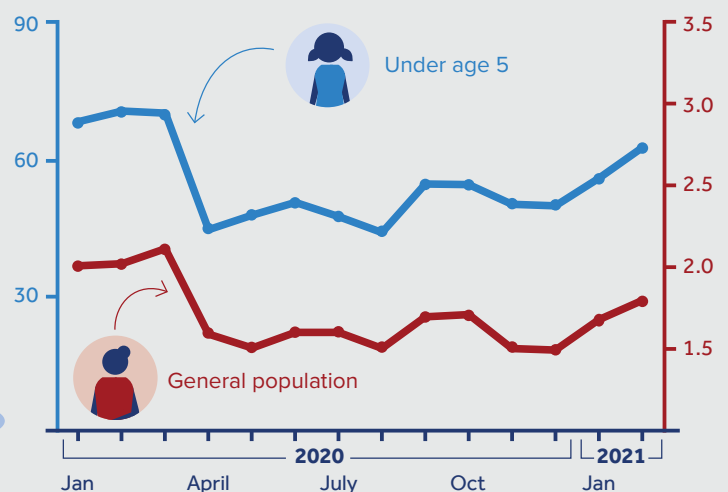
Overall, the pandemic period saw a decrease in access to health services, willingness to seek medical attention and patient day equivalents countrywide.

Among the population dependent on the public sector,

23% reported not seeking acute care when needed.



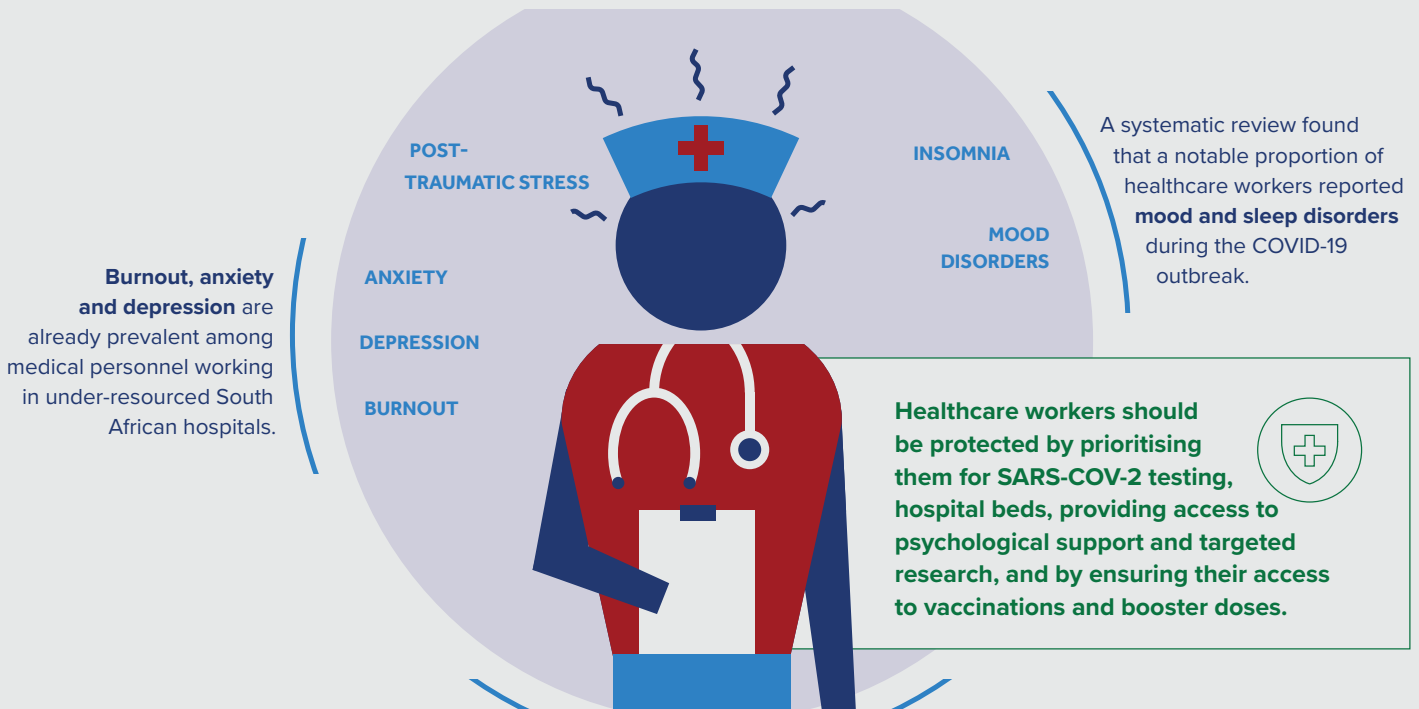
PHC UTILISATION RATE, JAN 2020 - MAR 2021





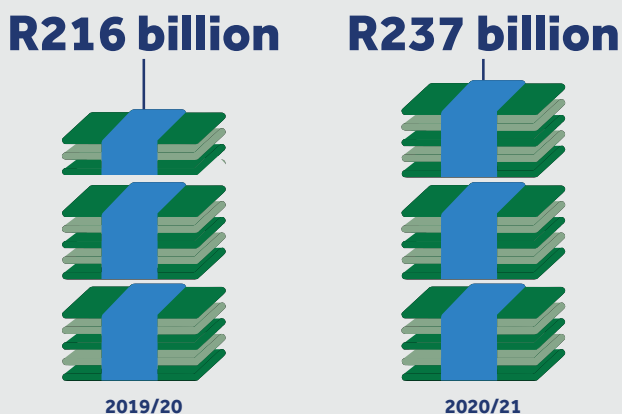
HEALTH CARE WORKERS EXPERIENCED HIGH LEVELS OF MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES DURING THE PANDEMIC

By 14 October 2021, 9 514 healthcare workers had been admitted to hospital with COVID-19, and 1 221 had died. There were also significant mental health effects.



GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON HEALTH INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY DURING 2020/21

Provincial and local government expenditure on health in the public sector increased from R216 billion in 2019/20 to R237 billion in 2020/21.



COVID-19 also had an impact on the proportion of the population covered by medical schemes.

MEDICAL SCHEME COVERAGE PER PROVINCE

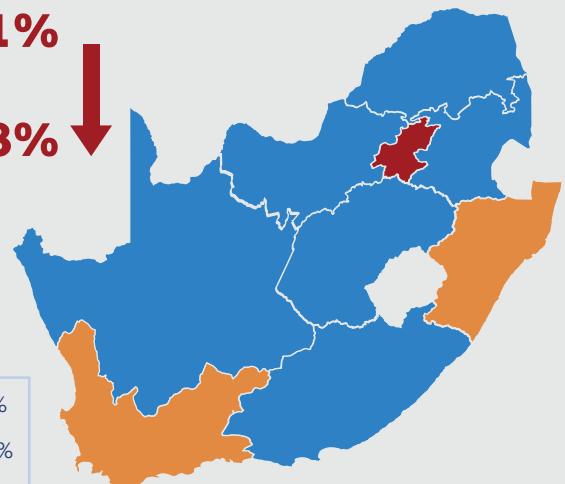
Beneficiaries covered by medical aid nationally

15.1%

in 2019

14.8%

in 2020



The average daily cost per patient also increased with the level of care – with the highest average daily cost being for ICU admissions for COVID-19.

