Situation report – COVID19; Japan 27th July 2021

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Current Situation in Japan

Test positives nationally:



National Reproduction Rate - Reff (R 1.27)



As the delta variant becomes dominant, case numbers continue to rise, now reaching a sevenday average of 4,000/day. This is below the peak levels seen in the 3rd and 4th waves, during both of which cases peaked at over 6,000 per day.

There is early evidence that while still incomplete, Japan's vaccination program is proving its worth. Vaccination rates are high in the most vulnerable groups (over 65s), and despite increasing case numbers, COVID19 mortality remains comparatively low. Comparison with earlier waves shows that current mortality is at least 75% below the level that would be expected had vaccines not been deployed. It is therefore to be hoped that once the vaccination rollout is complete, COVID19 will shift to become an endemic (background) infection which causes a similar disease burden to seasonal influenza.

Although mortality remains very low, there has been a small increase in critical illness (intensive care occupancy). This suggests that public health measures such as mask use need to remain in place for the time being.



Critical Illness (Nationwide)- daily total

Mortality (Nationwide) - daily



Current Situation in Tokyo & the Kanto Region

Tokyo daily cases (R 1.25)



Chiba prefecture (R 1.21)



Kanagawa prefecture (R 1.23)



Saitama prefecture (R 1.32)



While case numbers continue to rise both in Tokyo and in the surrounding prefectures, relative reproduction rates have fallen in all four areas, from 1.31 to 1.25 over the past seven days in Tokyo and by similar degrees in the Kanto region as a whole.

Tokyo remains under a state of emergency scheduled to stay in place until the 22nd of August, with primary prevention measures staying in place in surrounding prefectures until the same date.

Hospital Care and Testing in Tokyo



Hospitalizations have continued to rise over the past week though remain below the levels seen at the start of the year (over 3,000 beds were occupied during the first two weeks of January). Additional beds continue to be repurposed to care for COVID 19 patients, with the apparent intent of keeping occupancy below 50%.

Out of a total capacity of 5,967 beds, 2,717 (46%) are presently occupied. ICU capacity is under less pressure, with 78 of 392 (20%) beds currently being in use. Surge capacity therefore remains available.



Testing for COVID 19

Rates of testing remain stable though with a hiatus in testing over the 4-day holiday weekend. The steep rise in the percentage of positive tests continues, with a further increase in the rate of positive results from 10 to 15% over the past week. This suggests that daily infections are likely to increase further before peaking.

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Regional Situation

Okinawa remains the only prefecture outside of Kanto under a state of emergency, currently due to expire on the 22nd of August. Case numbers have risen steeply again over the past week, despite the ongoing state of emergency.





Osaka remains under primary prevention measures but has also seen an ongoing rise in infections over the past week.

Osaka (R 1.26)



Other large urban areas are no longer under any special measures. While case numbers are lower in absolute and per capita terms than Kanto, they are on the increase, a situation which looks set to continue or even accelerate over coming weeks.

Aichi (R 1.22)

Hokkaido (R 1.23)

Fukuoka (R 1.53)



COVID-19 Vaccination in Japan



Vaccine doses administered (cumulative, nationwide, percentage)

Vaccines continue to be administered at a rapid rate, with coverage approaching 40%. Administration continues at a steady rate of about 1.25 million doses a day:



Vaccines administered (7 day average of daily doses given)

Note that reporting delays mean that figures for the past 7 to 10 days are incomplete and are likely to be revised upwards as additional data is collected.

Applications for vaccine passports were accepted from Monday of this week, though with systems put in place varying by municipality. While some ward offices are issuing documents on the spot, others are accepting applications by post only.

Further details of the government's plans are available on the website of the Prime Minister's office: https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/headline/kansensho/vaccine.html

References and Resources

Reported Caseload Graphs and data sourced from MHLW as reported by Toyo Keizai and the Tokyo metropolitan government –

https://toyokeizai.net/sp/visual/tko/covid19/en.html https://stopcovid19.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en/ https://www.stopcovid19.jp/#Tokyo https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/special/coronavirus/vaccine/progress/ *Resources*

How to get help if you suspect that you have COVID19 (Tokyo residents) https://stopcovid19.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en/flow

FAQ: How foreign residents can get coronavirus vaccinations in Japan https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20210212/p2a/00m/0na/046000c