

PAKISTAN CORONAVIRUS CIVACTS CAMPAIGN

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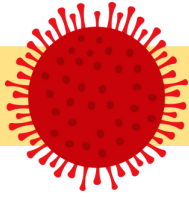


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With the continuous spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan; Accountability Lab is continuously building on its work with district governments and Community Front Liners (network of volunteers) through Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC) to debunk rumours, fake news & misinformation related to COVID-19. The Coronavirus CivActs Campaign supported by the Open Society Foundation also conducts fact-checking, synthesizes data, pushes out the verified information through weekly bulletins and social media campaign for mass awareness, and gathers feedback on the COVID19 response in Pakistan. The bulletins are disseminated in five languages including English, Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi & Sindhi to reach far and wide to help citizens build resilience and fight against the pandemic. These bulletins are also shared with a range of stakeholders from the general public, to government departments, development agencies, CSOs and humanitarian networks via online and offline means.

The campaign also highlights important government decisions, information about vaccination drives, community feedback and concerns related to COVID-19. The objective of the campaign is to enhance awareness among the most vulnerable segments of the society including women, youth, ethnic and religious minorities, transgenders and persons with disabilities. In the current phase of the campaign, Accountability Lab has also engaged the local female community leaders and building their capacity through training and active civic engagement to counter-myths and disseminate facts around COVID-19 and gender issues.



Omicron is just like a common cold



FACT ✓

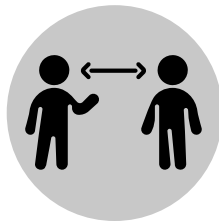
OR

MYTH ✗

Omicron is not like a common cold because it is more likely to land you in hospital. It is observed that people infected with the Omicron variant are being hospitalized and some people have already died as a result of it. It is also noted that people who have been infected from Omicron are also at risk of developing so-called Long COVID-19 conditions.

Source: [WHO](#)

PREVENTIVE MEASURES THAT CAN BE TAKEN AGAINST CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Wear a mask that has two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric and covers your mouth, nose and chin. It should not be loose on the sides.

Practice physical distancing outside your home by keeping a distance of 3 feet between you and others.

Get registered for vaccination as soon as possible and follow all pre and post-vaccination guidelines.

Avoid unnecessary contact with eyes, nose and mouth as that increases chances of virus transfer.



Keep yourself and your environment clean.



If you fall sick, stay at home and contact a healthcare provider.



Avoid unnecessary outdoor socialising and spending time in crowded spaces

WHAT IS THE RELATION BETWEEN TOBACCO USE AND COVID-19

Tobacco use may additionally increase the chance of suffering from severe signs and symptoms of Coronavirus. It is noticed that, compared to non-smokers, having a record of smoking may additionally increase the danger of unfavorable health outcomes for COVID-19 sufferers, such as being admitted to intensive care, requiring mechanical air flow and struggling with intense fitness results.

Smoking is already identified to be a chance-factor for many other breathing infections, which includes colds, influenza, pneumonia and tuberculosis. People who smoke are more likely to be affected by the virus more severely. Smoking is also related to increased improvement of acute respiratory distress syndrome, a key trouble for extreme instances of COVID-19, among people with extreme respiratory infections.

In China, where COVID-19 originated, suggests that humans who have cardiovascular and respiration conditions resulting from tobacco use, or in any other case, are at higher hazard of developing severe COVID-19 signs and symptoms.

Source: [WHO](#)



DON'T BE COMPLACENT, ANOTHER COVID-19 WAVE IS COMING

As we move into summers, more than two years since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the words “new wave” are probably the last thing anyone wants to hear. After all, the Omicron variant is **less severe**, but it has the capacity to reinfect people, even those who have had a previous version of Omicron. There is further evidence that reaching “herd immunity” (where enough people are vaccinated or infected to stop further circulation) against COVID-19 is **probably impossible**. Looking over the past two years, and across different places, a wave of COVID-19 cases every three months seems to be the pattern. So, it’s not surprising that this is happening again, and we should expect another wave this winter.

While the idea of the disease circulating might be anxiety-provoking, we now have a wealth of **scientific knowledge and tools** to deploy. The focus should be on what these cases mean for long Covid and for hospitalizations. Plus, there’s good news: **new research indicates** Omicron is indeed milder than Delta by a substantial amount in terms of hospitalizations and deaths. The situation is complex with no simple fix. We haven’t solved COVID-19 yet, but we are getting smarter and better at managing this disease.

Source: [GEO](#)

Expert's Interview

In this month's edition, we interviewed the president of the National Press Club (NPC) Islamabad, Mr. Anwar Raza. Anwar Raza has a Master's degree in Political Science with over 24 years of experience in Journalism. He is currently working as a Deputy Bureau Chief in a Public TV Channel in Islamabad. Previously, he has worked as a senior reporter for Samma news and also as an editor for Khabrain newspaper.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, what were some of the challenges faced by journalists, and were there some steps taken to overcome them?

When the Coronavirus outbreak occurred, everyone was terrified; and many people shifted to work from home. The situation restricted people to their homes. Whereas journalists due to the nature of their work were in the field to perform their duties.

As a result, many journalists were also infected due to the spread and nine journalists lost their lives in the line of duty. On the other hand, due to the economic downturn many employers from across Pakistan laid off their employees and more than eight thousand journalists lost their jobs.

National Press Club - as a representative body of journalists - has introduced various capacity building programs for the journalists who lost their jobs during COVID 19. The objective of these initiatives was to introduce them with new media technologies to continue their work independently using monetization techniques. The situation has now improved to an extent as the COVID-19 spread has declined and the economy is reviving gradually. We have asked the employers to return the cut-back on salaries and rehire the employees they had laid off.





What efforts were made by different media houses and organizations to ensure safety measures for their media workers?

When the COVID-19 outbreak occurred, we provided our journalists with masks, sanitizers, and gloves and ensured their vaccination on a priority basis. We also arranged a vaccination camp at the National Press Club Islamabad for our journalists. Later we arranged another vaccination camp in the Rawalpindi Camp Office, giving preference to the journalists working in the field. Thirdly, with the support of local administration, we conducted the COVID-19 testing and facilitated the treatment of victims of the virus.

How do you see the role of the media in spreading awareness about the importance of vaccines, SOP, and available facilities during the pandemic of coronavirus?

The role of the media has always remained positive during any national issue. During the pandemic days, we educated citizens through various seminars and workshops protection from virus, social distancing and vaccination.

Based on the SOPs and prevention measures issued by the government, we held seminars for public awareness with special focus on the journalist community; shared validated information with the fellow journalists and their families and supported government efforts by generating COVID-19 related content through publications and other available mediums. We also convinced our fellow journalists to contribute to this cause by . We also ensured that all fellow journalists are aware of the safety protocols during coverage of the pandemic; ensuring their own safety. I always tell our members that it is important to ensure their safety and of their colleagues while at work.



How do you see fake news and the use of social media during COVID-19?

As a standard practice at a media house, the news is disseminated after due verification and approval from designated officials. It is less likely that a news article is published or aired without due verification process and approval. Unfortunately, on social media due to the lack of similar frameworks as used by the media organizations; there is plenty of unverified information on social media. Due to the increasingly complex environment it requires proper understanding to filter the information from this clutter. Apart from journalists' bodies and other media development organizations; government is also working, there should be rules and regulations made for social media posting as well.



Where can I get tested?

Islamabad	National Institute of Health Park Road, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad
Karachi	Agha Khan University Hospital, Stadium Road, Karachi, Sindh
Hyderabad	Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS), Liberty Market Roundabout, Liaquat University Hospital, Hyderabad
Khairpur	Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences, Gambat, Khairpur, Sindh
Peshawar	Hayatabad Medical Complex Phase-4 Phase 4 Hayatabad, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
Mardan	Chughtai Lab Mardan point, near Allied Bank, Shamsi Road, Mardan, KP
Haripur	Excel Labs, TMA Plaza Shop No. 6, Near Girls Degree College Circular Road Haripur, KP
Lahore	Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital, 7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town, Lahore, Punjab
Multan	Nishtar Hospital Nishtar Road, Justice Hamid Colony, Multan
Rawalpindi	Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Range Road, CMH Complex, Rawalpindi, Punjab
Quetta	Fatima Jinnah Hospital Bahadurabad, Wahdat Colony, Quetta
Muzaffarabad	Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS), Ambore, Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir
Gilgit	District Headquarters Hospital, Hospital Road, Gilgit, GB

For more cities visit the [COVID-19 Health Advisory Platform](#)