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<b>Date:</b>	<b>5-05-2021</b>	<b>Document:</b>	<b>F21-020 EN</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>National Report Cyprus</b>		
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# **CYPRUS TURKISH** **MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

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Country Report

03/05/2021

North Cyprus

While the struggle with the Covid pandemic has been going on for almost one and a half years, the people have experienced difficulties in adapting to our new lifestyle. Our country has been affected like other countries, and our economy hit the rocks. Tourism and higher education, which are the two sectors that are the biggest source of income in our country, are in a very difficult situation due to closures, restrictions, and quarantine practices. It is stated that the number of university students, which was around 103,000, became around 40,000 by December 2020. With the new decision of the Cabinet, tourism in its traditional form ended. Some hotels have been used as quarantine centers since the beginning of the pandemic. All sea and airways are open, albeit with limitations, and entry without quarantine is prohibited.

Most of the sectors have now been opened. A decision was taken by the government last year to financially support the various sectors during the period of closure, but there is a problem with the payments in support which were planned. Currently, curfews are imposed from 9 p.m to 5 a.m, and there is a full day of curfew on Sundays.

Due to a decision taken about a month ago, those who receive immunosuppressive treatment, individuals in need of various forms of care, children, pregnant women and mothers with babies, those who have had an operation recently, have experienced electronic wristband monitoring, and home quarantine.

Covid-19 transmission has been observed in healthcare workers since September 2020, although in small numbers. In addition to internal contamination in the Nicosia and Kyrenia Hospitals, there has been contamination among the staff at the pandemic hospital. The Ministry of Health employed additional personnel for the fight against the pandemic, but the desired effect cannot be achieved due to insufficient numbers of personnel, and the fact that the coordination has not been effective.

It was decided by the Ministry of Education to initiate face-to-face training for Grade 12 on April 1, but the teacher's unions declined to implement face-to-face education as neither students nor teachers had Covid 19 antibody tests, and the majority had not been vaccinated. On April 26th in person education resumed in order to carry out the examinations.

Since the prime minister, who was a candidate in the presidential election, won and became the president, a new coalition government was established and the health

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minister who had been in charge from the beginning of the pandemic, was dismissed and the new health minister was appointed.

In our country vaccination started on 15,1,2021, double-dose vaccination of all healthcare workers was completed, and most of them were vaccinated with the Sinovac vaccine and a very limited number of Pfizer biontech vaccines. Healthcare professionals, people over 65 years of age and those with chronic diseases have been vaccinated. The last vaccine that came to the country is the AstraZeneca - Oxford vaccine. The Ministry of Health has started to accept vaccination applications with a form to be filled out on its website, and the appointment system has been started. The procurement of vaccines is mostly made by donated vaccines from Turkey, and a small amount from the European Union. In April, a break of approximately 3 weeks was given due to the lack of vaccine supply. The vaccination program is still ongoing despite some problems.

As for the current cases related to Covid-19, the total number of cases, which was 2208 in January 2021, has increased to 6361 as of today, while the deaths in total has increased to 32. Currently, the number of active cases in quarantine centres is 530, and the number of patients treated in the covid wards is 99, and the number of patients in intensive care is 4.

Cyprus Turkish Medical Association