



# HIGHLIGHTS

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- As of 5 September 2020, 2 686 (4.2%) of the 64 705 COVID-19 hospital admissions recorded on the DATCOV surveillance database, were health care workers (HCWs), reported from 247 facilities (81 public-sector and 166 private-sector) in all nine provinces of South Africa. Among 801/2686 (29.8%) HCWs with available data on type of work, 391/801 (48.8%) were nurses, 168/801 (21.0%) were categorized as other HCWs, 111/801 (13.9%) porters or administrators, 57/801 (7.1%) allied HCWs, 52/801 (6.5%) doctors, 15/801 (1.9%) paramedics, and 7/801 (0.9%) laboratory scientists.
  - There was an increase of 157 new HCW admissions since week 35.
  - There were 360 (13.4%) and 2326 (86.6%) admissions reported in the public and private sector, respectively.
  - The majority of HCW admissions were reported in Gauteng (834, 31.1%), KwaZulu-Natal (656, 24.4%), Eastern Cape (465, 17.3%) and Western Cape (281, 10.5%).
  - The median age of COVID-19 HCW admissions was 49 years, there were 482 (17.9%) admissions in HCWs aged 60 years and older. A total of 1912 (71.2%) were female.
  - A comorbid disease was reported in 1943 (72.3%) HCWs. In 1154/2686 (43.0%) of HCWs, at least one comorbid disease was reported and 419/1154 (36.3%) had more than one comorbidity reported. Among the 1154 HCWs who had reported a comorbid condition, the most commonly reported comorbid conditions were hypertension (753/1154; 65.3%) and diabetes (492/1154; 42.6%). There were 153 (13.3%) HCWs who were HIV positive, 21 (1.8%) with active tuberculosis (TB) and eight (0.7%) with a previous history of TB.
  - A total of 176 (6.55%) HCWs had severe disease defined as receiving treatment in high care or intensive care unit (ICU) or ventilated or diagnosed with acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS).
  - Of the 2686 HCW admissions, 112 (4.2%) were in hospital at the time of this report, 2292 (85.3%) were discharged alive, 36 (1.3%) transferred out and 246 (9.2%) HCWs had died. Eighty-one (81) of the 246 deaths (32.9%) were reported in the Eastern Cape, 60 (24.4%) from Gauteng and 57 (23.2%) from KwaZulu-Natal provinces. Of those who died, 168 (68.3%) had at least one comorbid disease reported and 85 (34.6%) had more than one reported comorbidity.
  - The case fatality ratio among HCWs with known in-hospital outcome was 9.7%.
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# Methods

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DATCOV, sentinel hospital surveillance for COVID-19 admissions, was initiated on the 1 April 2020. Data are submitted by public and private hospitals that have agreed to report COVID-19 admissions through DATCOV surveillance in all nine provinces of South Africa (Table 1). A COVID-19 case was defined as a person with a positive reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) assay for SARS-CoV-2 who was admitted to a DATCOV sentinel hospital. All hospitalized patients who were noted to be doctors, nurses, allied health care workers, laboratory staff, porters and administrative staff were captured as health care workers (HCWs). An individual was defined as having severe disease if treated in high care or intensive care unit (ICU) or ventilated or diagnosed with acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS).

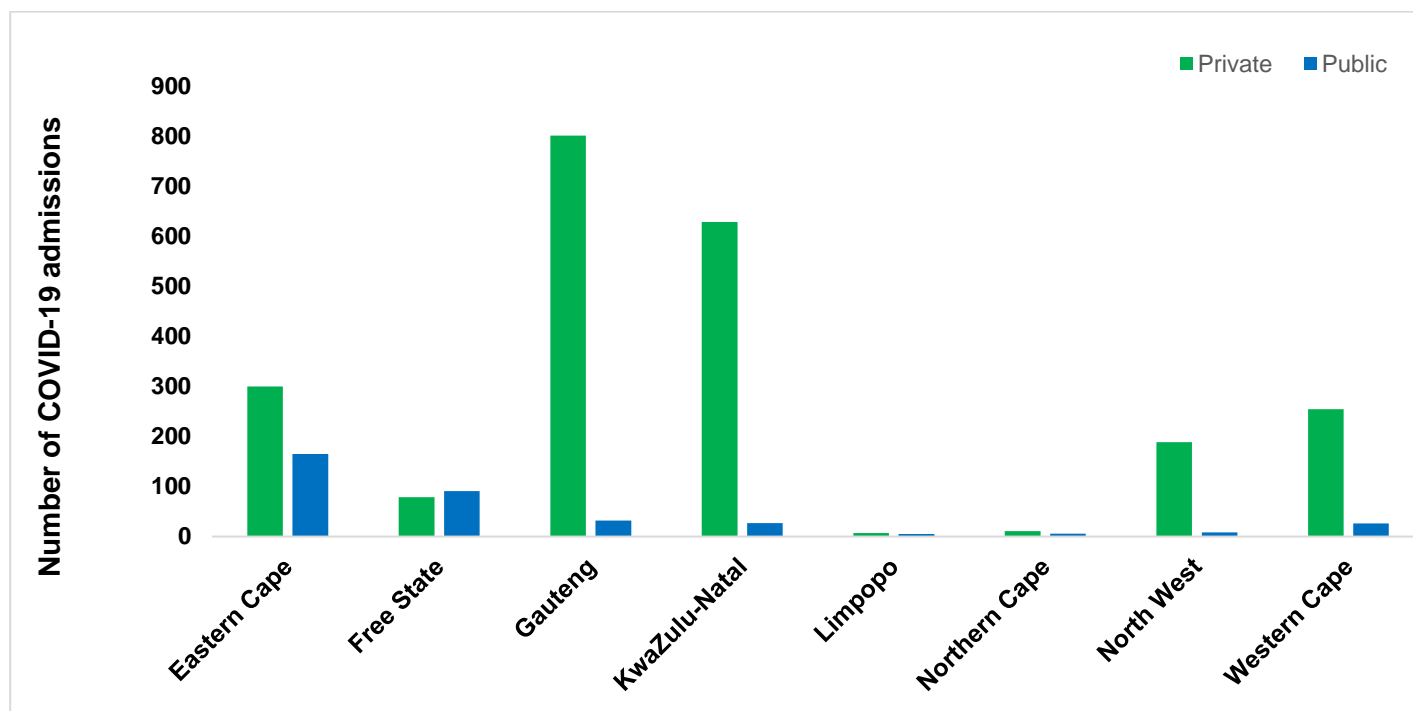
Data on all COVID-19 admissions are received from all private hospitals nationally, and a subset of public hospitals in all nine provinces (data are received from all public hospitals in the Western Cape (WC) Province). As new hospitals join the surveillance system, they retrospectively captured all admissions recorded. As of 5 September 2020, a total of 438 facilities, 194 from public sector and 244 from private sector, submitted data on hospitalized patients with COVID-19 (Table 1). There were 17 additional hospitals (16 public sector and 1 private sector) reporting COVID-19 admissions since the last report. Data on hospitalized HCWs who were diagnosed with COVID-19 from 5 March to 5 September 2020 were collected from 247 hospitals (81 public and 166 private) of the 438 participating sentinel hospitals.

**Table 1:** Number of hospitals reporting data on COVID-19 admissions by province and health-sector, South Africa, 5 March – 5 September 2020

Facilities reporting	Public	Private
Eastern Cape	78	17
Free State	28	20
Gauteng	6	88
KwaZulu-Natal	8	45
Limpopo	3	6
Mpumalanga	12	9
North West	2	12
Northern Cape	1	7
Western Cape	56	40
South Africa	194	244

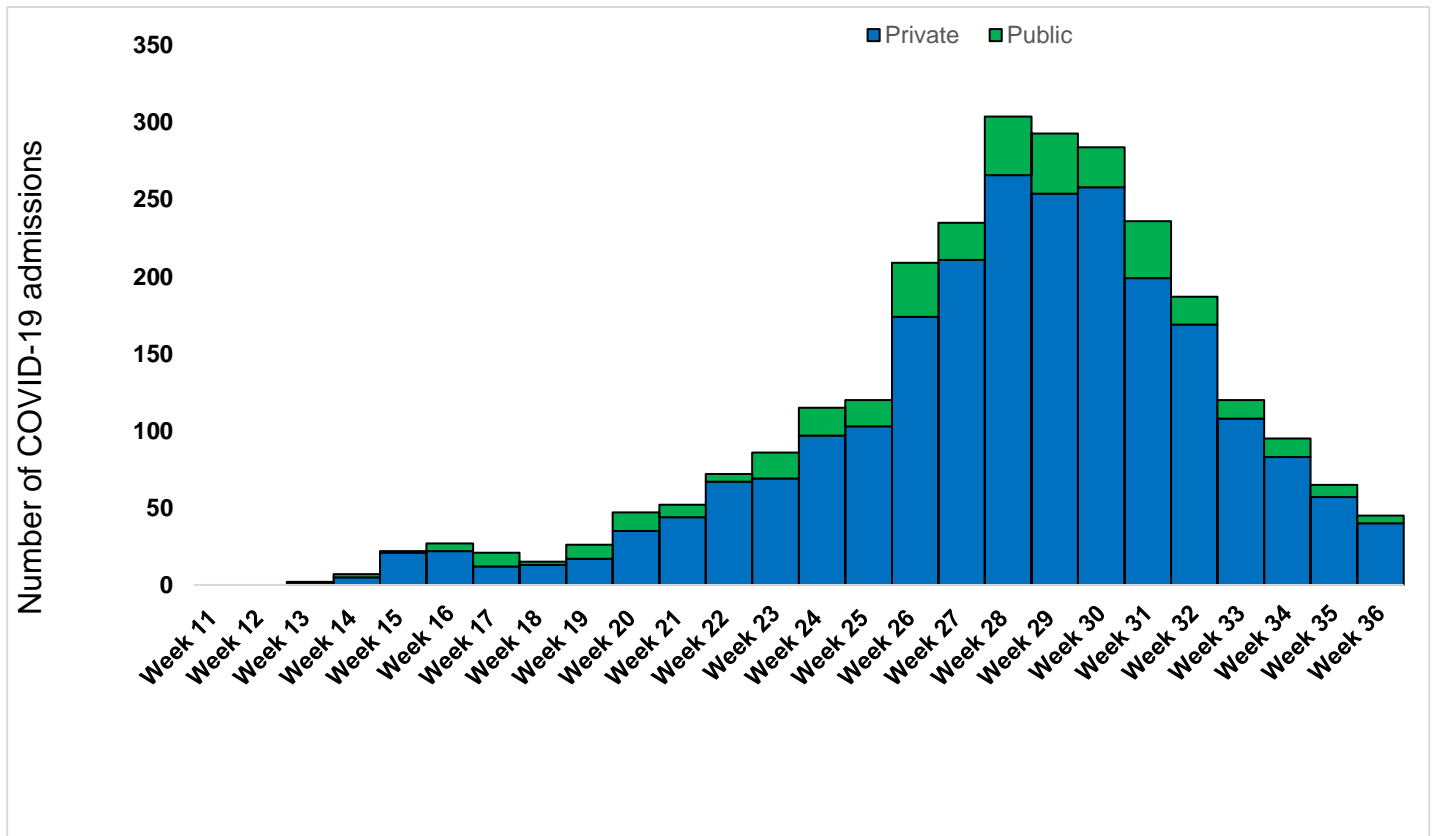
# Results

From 5 March to 5 September 2020, there was a total of 2686/64705 (4.2%) COVID-19 admissions among HCWs (157 additional admissions from the last report) reported from 247 facilities in all nine provinces of South Africa. Of these admissions, 360 (13.4%) and 2326 (86.6%) were reported in the public and private sector, respectively (Figure 1). The majority of HCW admissions (2236/2686; 83.2%) were recorded in four provinces, with the highest number 834/2686 (31.1%) reported in Gauteng, followed by 656/2686 (24.4%) in KwaZulu-Natal, 465/2686 (17.3%) in Eastern Cape and 281/2686 (10.5%) in Western Cape provinces (Figure 1).



**Figure 1:** Number of reported COVID-19 admissions among HCWs by province and health-sector, South Africa, 5 March – 5 September 2020 (n=2686)

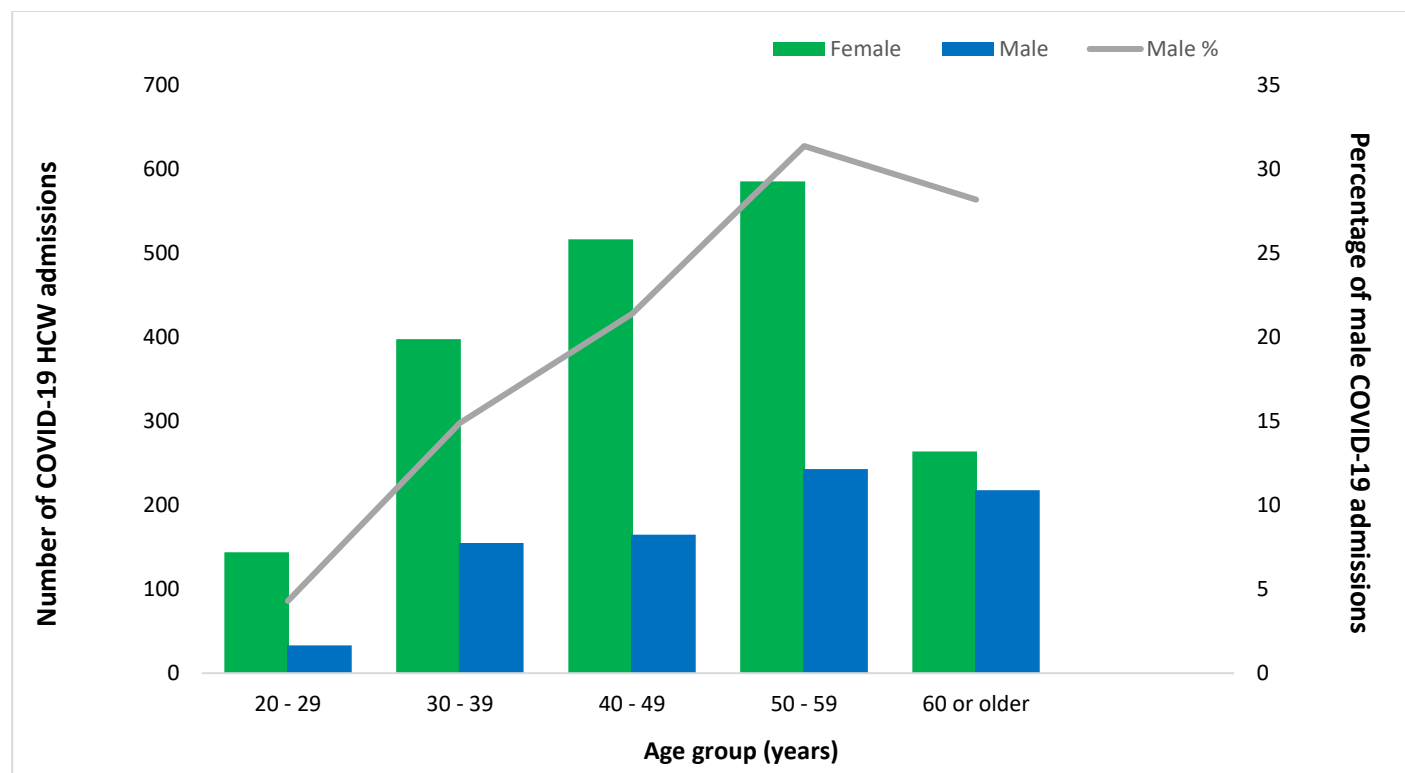
The majority of HCW admissions continue to be reported in the private sector (86.6%) (Figure 2). The overall number of admissions has been decreasing since week 30.



**Figure 2:** Number of reported COVID-19 admissions among HCWs by epidemiologic week of diagnosis and health-sector, South Africa, 5 March– 5 September 2020 (n=2686)

# Demographic and clinical characteristics of COVID-19 admissions among HCWs, South Africa, 5 March– 5 September 2020

The median age of COVID-19 admissions among HCWs was 49 years (interquartile range [IQR] 39–57). There were 482 (17.9%) admissions in patients 60 years and older (Figure 3). Among admitted HCWs with COVID-19, 1912 (71.2%) were female. The sex ratio varied by age group with females more common than males in all age groups (Figure 3). Among the 1912 female admissions, 47 (2.5%) were pregnant.



**Figure 3:** Number of reported COVID-19 HCW admissions by age, gender and percentage of males, South Africa, 5 March– 5 September 2020 (n=2686)

There were 3 HCWs whose age was unknown at the time of this report's dissemination.

Comorbidity was reported in 1943 (72.3%) HCWs. Forty-three percent (1154/2686) had at least one comorbid disease and 419/1154 (36.3%) had more than one comorbidity reported. Among the 1154 HCWs who had reported a comorbid condition, the most commonly reported comorbid conditions were hypertension (753/1154; 65.3%) and diabetes (492/1154; 42.6%). There were 153 (13.3%) HCWs who were HIV positive, 21 (1.8%) with active tuberculosis (TB) and eight (0.7%) with a previous history of TB (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Reported comorbid diseases in COVID-19 admissions among HCWs reporting at least one comorbid disease, South Africa, 5 March– 5 September 2020 (n=1154)

Comorbid disease*	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Hypertension	753	65.3
Diabetes mellitus	492	42.6
Chronic cardiac disease	43	3.7
Chronic pulmonary disease/Asthma	161	14.0
Chronic renal disease	8	0.7
Malignancy	15	1.3
HIV	153	13.3
Active tuberculosis	21	1.8
Previous history of tuberculosis	8	0.7

\* Multiple comorbid conditions would be counted more than once so the total number may be more than the total number of individuals reporting comorbid conditions

## Severity

- Of the 2686 COVID-19 HCW admissions to date, 176 (6.55%) met the criteria for severe disease defined as receiving treatment in high care or intensive care unit (ICU) or ventilated or diagnosed with acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). The mean age of patients who had severe disease (53 years) was significantly different from those who did not have severe disease (48 years) ( $p < 0.001$ ). Of the 176 with severe disease, 113 (64.2%) had at least one comorbid disease ( $p < 0.001$ ).

## Outcomes

Of the 2686 admitted HCWs, 2292 (85.3%) were discharged alive, 36 (1.3%) were transferred out to either higher level care or step-down facilities, 246 (9.2%) died, and 112 (4.2%) were currently in hospital. The case fatality ratio (CFR) of 9.7% (246/2538) among HCWs with known in-hospital outcome was lower than the CFR among non-HCW admissions reported to DATCOV (18.7%, 11056/59071).

The majority of HCW deaths, 81 (32.9%), were reported in the Eastern Cape, followed by 60 (24.4%) from Gauteng and 57 (23.2%) from KwaZulu-Natal provinces. Hundred and ten (44.7%) deaths recorded were among HCWs aged 60 years and older. The median age of those who died was 58 (IQR 51 – 64) years compared to 48 (IQR 38 – 57) years for those who were still alive. One (0.4%) deceased HCW was pregnant. Hundred (40.7%) of the deceased were admitted in ICU, 76 (30.9%) were ventilated, and 105 (42.7%) were given supplemental oxygen. The median length of stay for the HCWs who died was 10 days [IQR 4 – 18] compared to 6 days [3 – 10] for those discharged alive. Of the HCW who died, 168 (68.3%) had at least one comorbid disease reported and 85 (34.6%) had more than one reported comorbidity. Hypertension (127/246; 54.0%) and diabetes (98/246; 41.7%) were the common reported comorbid diseases.

Please note that the mortality data presented was based on available information from sentinel hospitals as of 5 September 2020, thus not all deaths that occurred during the reporting period nationally are included. Deaths that were subsequently confirmed not be of a HCW were removed from the data set.

## Conclusion

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Admissions among HCW are declining in keeping with the national trend. We continue to observe a high percentage of deaths amongst HCWs older than 60 years of age. Healthcare workers with comorbid medical conditions also have a higher proportion of deaths.



# Acknowledgements

Western Cape province: all public sector hospitals submitting data to DATCOV

Public hospitals using DATCOV surveillance online platform:

Eastern Cape	
Aberdeen Hospital	Adelaide Hospital
Aliwal North Hospital	All Saints Hospital
Andries Vosloo Hospital	Bambisana Hospital
Bedford Hospital	Bisho Hospital
Burgersdorp Hospital	Butterworth Hospital
Cala Hospital	Cathcart Hospital
Cecilia Makiwana Hospital	Cloete Joubert Hospital
Cofimvaba Hospital	Cradock Hospital
Dora Nginza Hospital	Dordrecht Hospital
Dr Malizo Mpehle Hospital	Elizabeth Donkin Hospital
Elliot Hospital	Empilisweni Hospital
Empilweni Hospital	Fort Beaufort Hospital
Fort England Hospital	Frere Hospital
Frontier Hospital	Glen Grey Hospital
Greenville Hospital	Grey Hospital
Hewu Hospital	Holy Cross Hospital
Humansdorp Hospital	Indwe Hospital
Isilimela Hospital	Jamestown Hospital
Kareedouw Hospital	Khotsong TB Hospital
Komani Hospital	Komga Hospital
Lade Grey Hospital	Livingstone Hospital
Maclear Hospital	Madwaleni Hospital
Madzikana ka Zulu Memorial Hospital	Midland Hospital
Mjanyana Hospital	Molteno Hospital
Mount Ayliff Hospital	Nelson Mandela Academic Hospital
Nkqubela Chest Hospital	Nompumelelo Hospital
Orsmond Hospital	Port Alfred Hospital
SS Gida Hospital	Rev Dr Elizabeth Mamisa Chabula-Nxiweni Field
Sawas Hospital	Settlers Hospital
Sipetu Hospital	St Barnabas Hospital
St Elizabeth Hospital	St Francis Hospital
St Patricks Hospital	Sterkstroom Hospital
Steynsburg Hospital	Stutterheim Hospital
Sundays Valley Hospital	Tafalofefe Hospital
Taylor Bequest Hospital (Matatiele)	Taylor Bequest Hospital (Mount Fletcher)
Tower Psychiatric Hospital	Uitenhage Hospital
Umlamli Hospital	Umtata General Hospital
Victoria Hospital	Wilhelm Stahl Hospital
Willowmore Hospital	Winterberg TB Hospital
Zithulele hospital	
Free State	
3 Military Hospital,	Albert Nzula District Hospital
Boitumelo Hospital	Bongani Regional Hospital
Botshabelo Hospital	Diamant Hospital
Dihlabeng Hospital	Dr Js Moroka Hospital
Elizabeth Ross Hospital	Fezi Ngubentombi Provincial Hospital
Itemoheng Hospital	John Daniel Newsberry Hospital

Katleho Hospital	Manapo Hospital
Mohau Hospital	Nala Hospital
National District Hospital	Nketoana District Hospital
Parys Hospital	Pelonomie Hospital
Phekolong Hospital	Phumelela Hospital
Senorita Ntlabathi Hospital	Stoffel Coetzee Hospital
Thebe Hospital	Thusanong Hospital
Universitas Hospital	Winburg Hospital
House Idahlia Critical Care Surge Facility	
Gauteng	
Charlotte Maxeke Hospital	Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital
Helen Joseph Hospital	Leratong Hospital
Steve Biko Academic Hospital	Tambo Memorial Hospital
KwaZulu-Natal	
Addington Hospital	Edendale Hospital
General Justice Gizenga Mpanza Hospital	Grey's Hospital
Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital	King Edward VIII Hospital
Ladysmith Hospital	Manguzi Hospital
Limpopo	
Kgapane Hospital	Polokwane Hospital
Siloam Hospital	
Mpumalanga	
Barberton Hospital	Belfast Hospital
Bethal Hospital	Carolina Hospital
Lydenburg Hospital	Mapulaneng Hospital
Matibidi Hospital	Matikwana Hospital
Middelburg Hospital	Rob Ferreira Hospital
Sabie Hospital	Shongwe Hospital
Barberton TB Specialised Hospital	Themba Hospital
Tonga Hospital	Waterval-Boven Hospital
North West	
Job Shimankana Tabane Hospital	Tshepong Hospital
Northern Cape	
Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Hospital	
Western Cape	
Tygerberg Hospital	

Private hospital groups submitting data to DATCOV:

- Netcare
- Life Healthcare
- Mediclinic Southern Africa
- National Hospital Network (NHN)
- Clinix Health Group
- Lenmed
- Joint Medical Holdings (JMH)
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Private hospitals using DATCOV surveillance online platform:

Eastern Cape	
Aurura Hospital	Aurura Rehabilitation Hospital
Care Cure Queenstown	Matatiele Private Hospital
Nurture Queenstown	Nurture Sunnyside
Free State	
Busamed Bram Fischer Airport Hospital	Busamed Harrismith Private Hospital
Cairnhall Hospital	Corona Sub-Acute Hospital
Emoyamed Private Hospital	Hillandale Health Care centre
Nurture Woodlands	Riemland Clinic
St Helena GM Hospital	
Gauteng	

Arwyp Medical Centre	Busamed Modderfontein Private Hospital
Botshilu Private Hospital	Louis Pasteur Private Hospital
Lynnmed Clinic	Midvaal Private Hospital
Nurture Rynmed	Nurture Vereeniging
Pretoria Urology Hospital	RH Rand Hospital
Sunshine Hospital	Zuid Afrikaans Hospital
KwaZulu-Natal	
Aba Qulusi Private Hospital	Ahmed Al-Kadi Private Hospital
Busamed Gateway Private Hospital	Busamed Hillcrest Private Hospital
Capital hospital	Hibiscus Cato Ridge Hospital
Hibiscus Private Hospital	KwaDukuza Private Hospital
Midlands Medical Centre Private Hospital	Nurture Ilembe
	Shelly Beach Private Hospital
Limpopo	
Zoutpansberg Private Hospital	
Mpumalanga	
Kiaat Private Hospital	RH Piet Retief Hospital
North West	
Medicare Private Hospital	Mooimed Private Hospital
Sunningdale Hospital	Vryburg private hospital
Wilmed Park Private Hospital	
Northern Cape	
Lenmed Royal Hospital and Heart Centre	
Western Cape	
Busamed - Paardevlei private hospital	Nurture Cape View
Nurture Newlands	