

Abstract

Outcome of antigen testing for COVID-19 on arrival at Ghana's international airport 2020-2022

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APHA 2022 Annual Meeting and Expo

Ghana as part of response measures to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 closed the Kotoka International Airport (KIA) in March 2020. In September 2020, Ghana reopened the airport with the implementation of COVID-19 antigen testing on arrival based on a set criterion. All arriving eligible passengers were to present a negative PCR test result in addition to the rapid diagnostic testing based on Immuno-fluorescent assay technology for COVID-19 on arrival in Ghana. We review secondary data on results of COVID-19 antigen testing at the KIA among international arrivals from September 2020 to February 2022. A total of 822,801 passengers were tested during the period under consideration. The age range for persons tested was from 5 years to 87 years. Among all passengers tested, a total of 7,425 (0.9%) were positive for COVID-19. Among all persons testing positive for COVID-19, approximately 59% were male. The month of December 2021 recorded the highest number of COVID-19 positive cases (2,383; 32.1%) with September 2020 recording the lowest number of cases (47; 0.63%). January 2022 recorded the highest proportion of COVID-19 positive cases among arrivals tested (2.72%) with October 2021 recording the lowest positivity rate of 0.14%. The implementation of antigen testing on arrival for persons with previous PCR test for COVID-19 at the Kotoka International airport provided an extra layer of protection for the general population of Ghana against COVID-19. This public health measure has demonstrated the need for multiple layers of public health protective measures against diseases of pandemic potential.

