



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

COVID-19 Press Briefing

December 7, 2021



Daily Change in COVID-19 Cases, US

January 22, 2020 – December 05, 2021

TOTAL Cases Reported Since 1/22/20

49,002,475

NEW Cases Reported to CDC on 12/5/21

40,105

Change in 7-Day Case Average

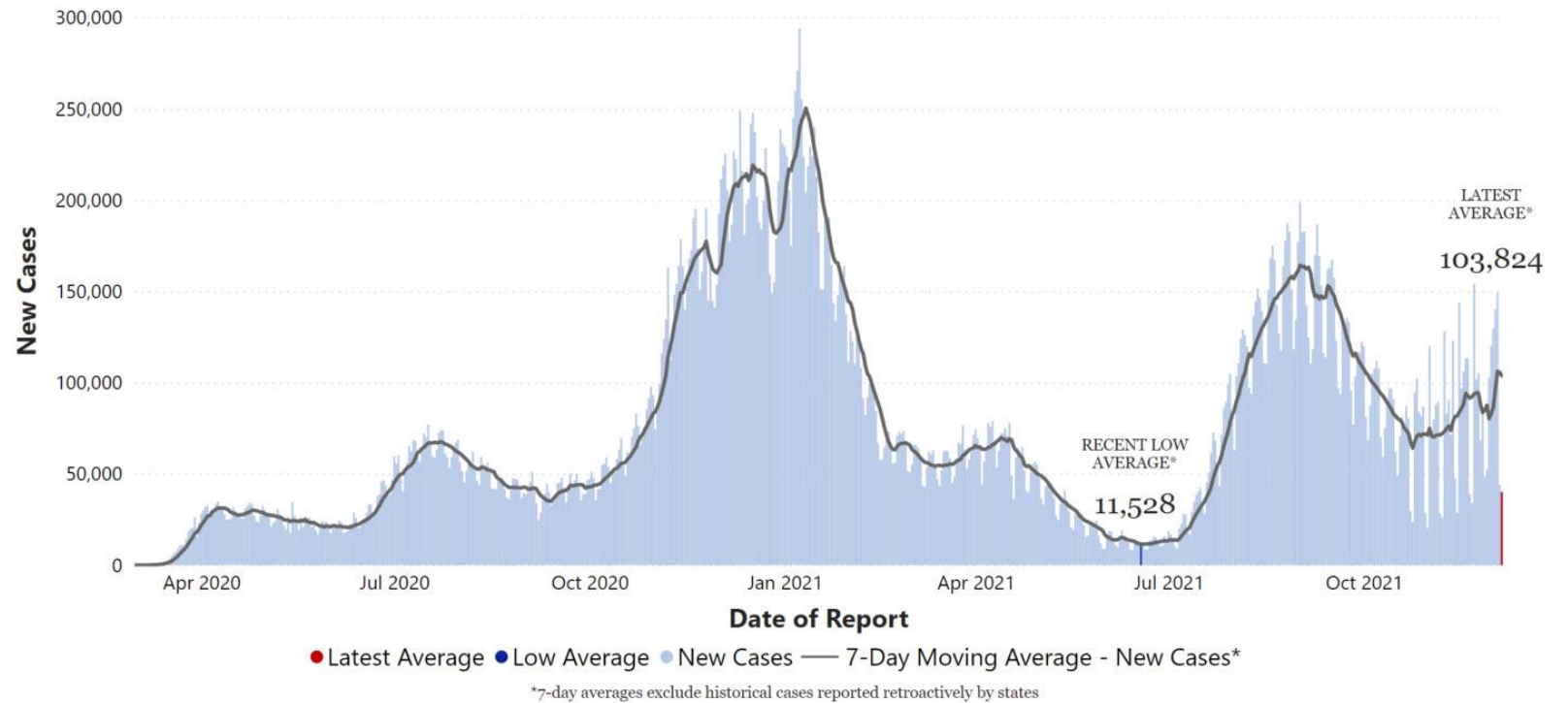
+18.5%

Current 7-Day Case Average (11/29/21 - 12/5/21)

103,824

Prior 7-Day Case Average (11/22/21 - 11/28/21)

87,603



New Admissions of Patients with Confirmed COVID-19, US

August 1, 2020 – December 04, 2021

Patients Currently Hospitalized with COVID on 12/4/21

39,817

New Admissions on 12/4/21

5,795

Peak in New Admissions (1/5/21)

17,949

Change in 7-Day Average of New Admissions

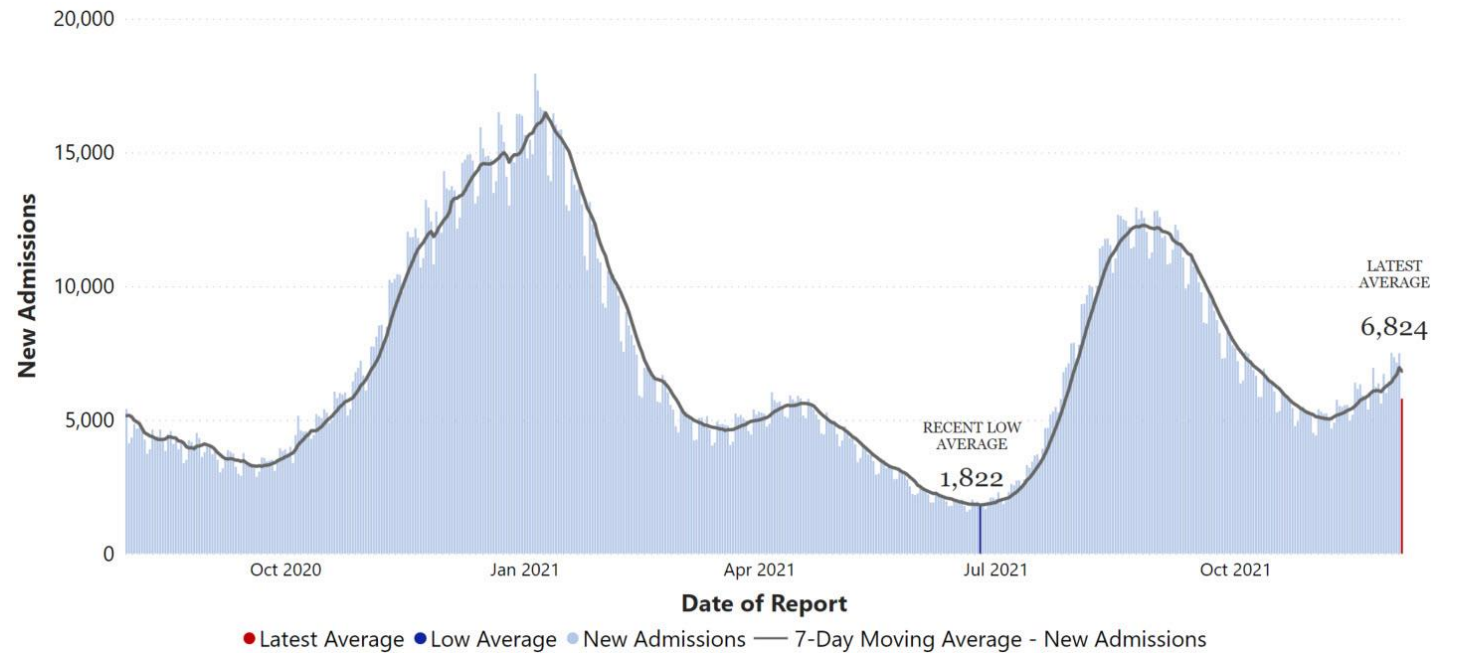
+10.5%

Current 7-Day Average of New Admissions (11/28/21 - 12/4/21)

6,824

Prior 7-Day Average of New Admissions (11/21/21 - 11/27/21)

6,175



Daily Change in COVID-19 Deaths, US

January 22, 2020 – December 05, 2021

TOTAL Deaths Reported Since 1/22/2020

785,655

NEW Deaths Reported to CDC on 12/5/21

177

Change in 7-Day Death Average

+57.4%

Current 7-Day Death Average (11/29/21 - 12/5/21)

1,155

Prior 7-Day Death Average (11/22/21 - 11/28/21)

734

Forecasted Total Deaths by 12/25/21

805,000 to 817,000

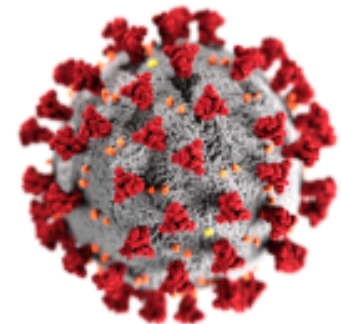


*7-day averages exclude historical cases reported retroactively by states



Key Omicron Unknowns

- **Transmissibility**
- **Severity of Disease**
- **Immune Evasion**

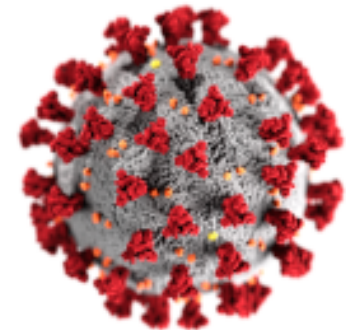


Key Omicron Unknowns

■ Transmissibility

■ Severity of Disease

■ Immune Evasion

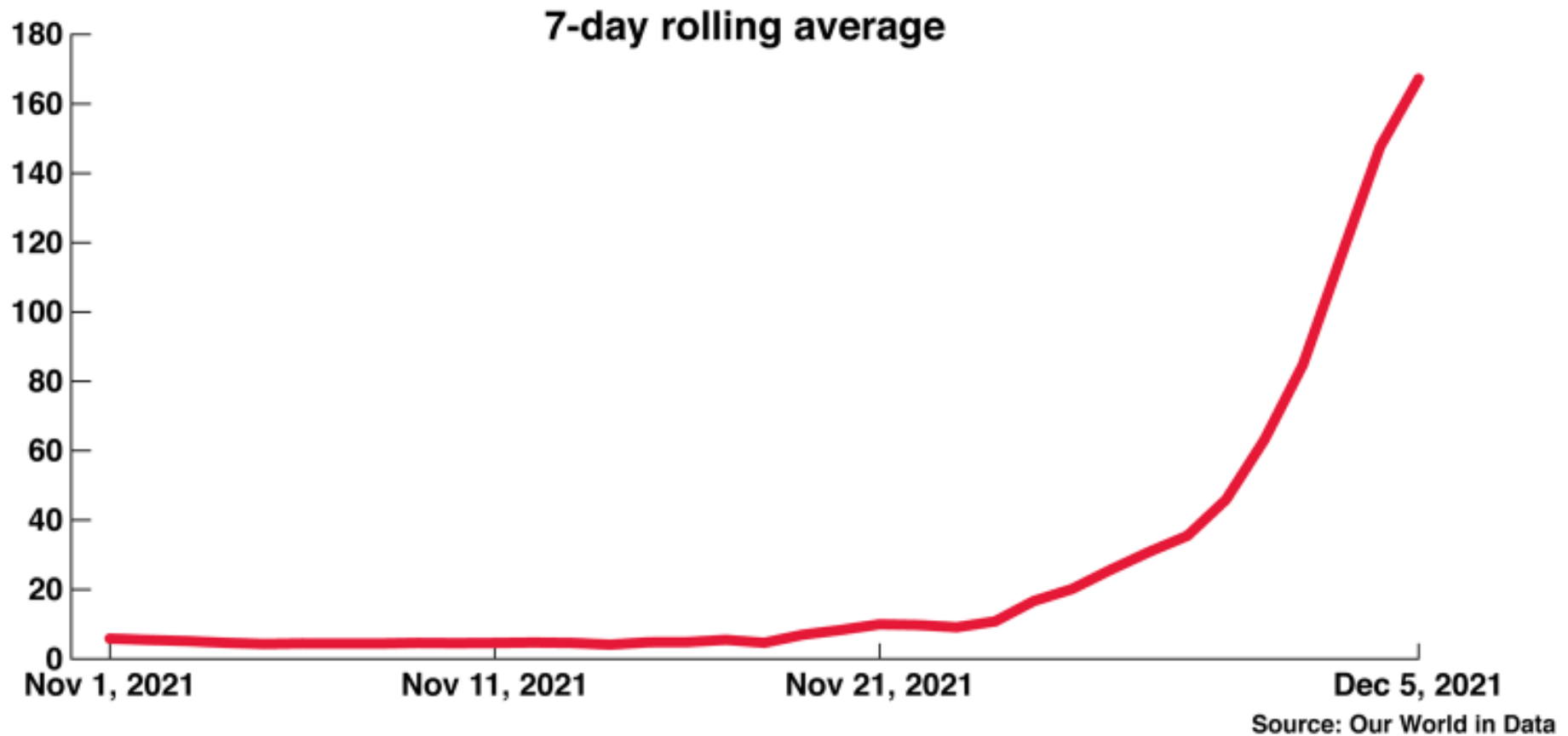


Omicron May Be More Transmissible Than Delta

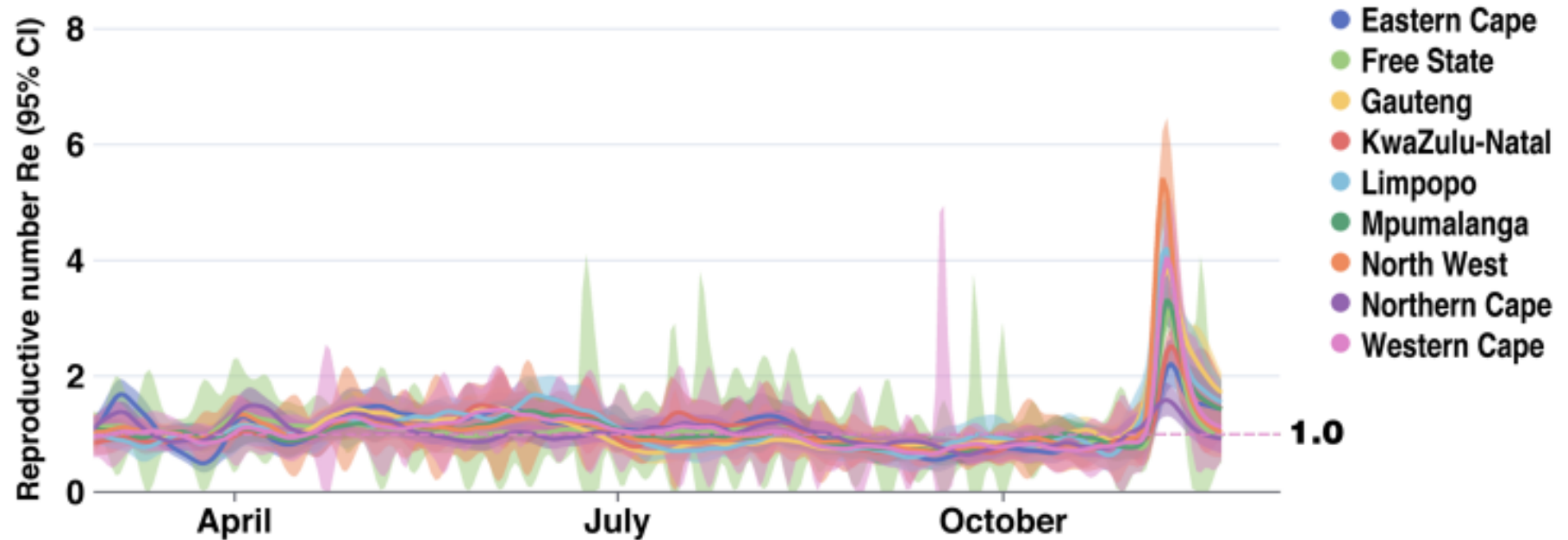
- **Omicron has mutations seen in other variants that are associated with more evasion of immunity and increased infectivity**
- **Real-world evidence from South Africa**
 - Rapid increase in cases
 - Increase of the effective reproductive number
 - Rapid replacement of Delta variant by Omicron



Daily New Confirmed COVID-19 Cases per Million People: South Africa



South Africa: Effective Reproductive Number (R_e) Has Risen Since Appearance of Omicron

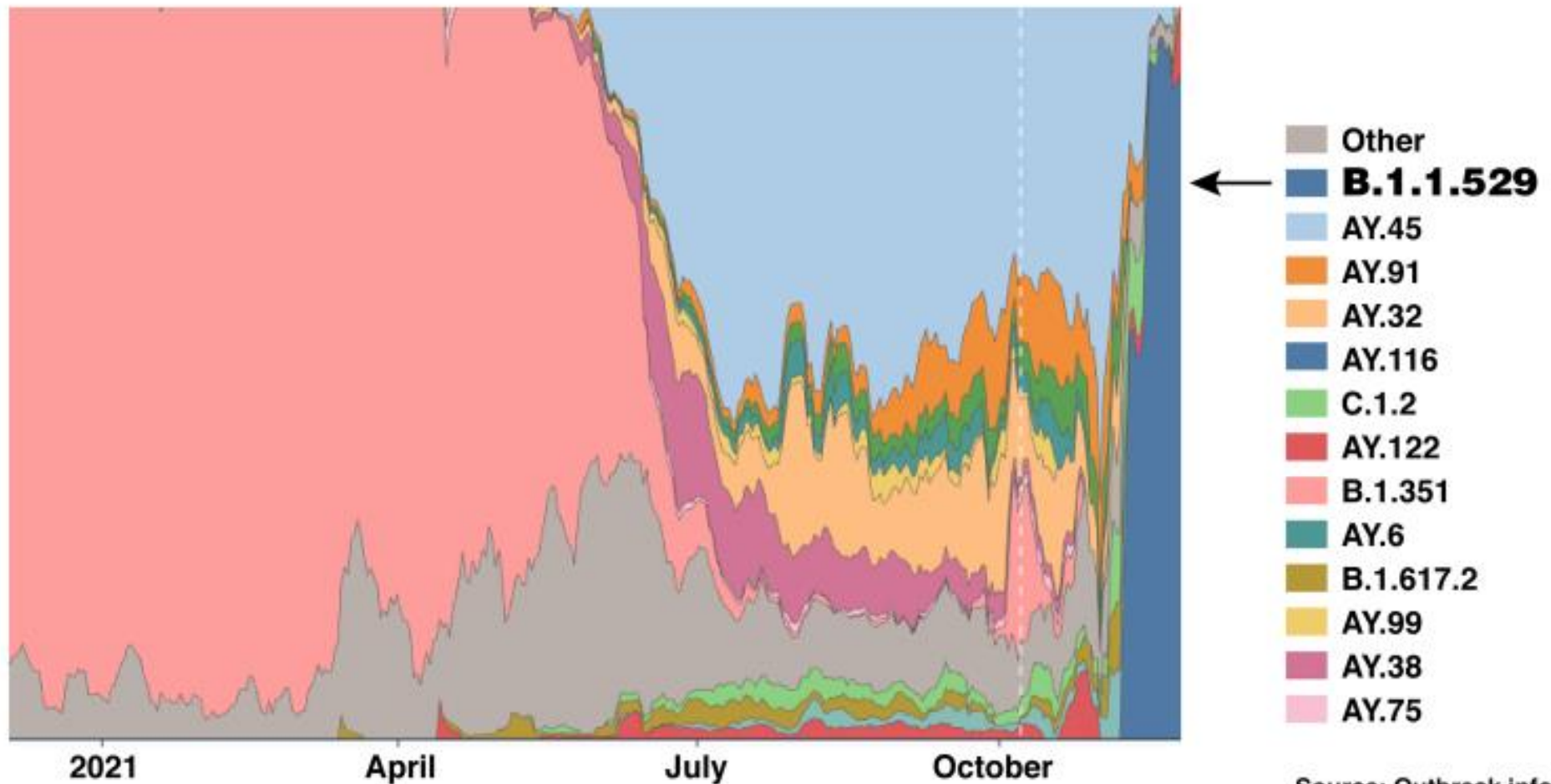


■ R_e quantifies how many people are infected on average by an infected person.

Source: <https://ibz-shiny.ethz.ch/covid-19-re-international/>



South Africa: Omicron Now Dominant

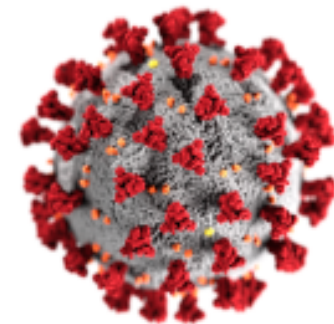


Key Omicron Unknowns

■ **Transmissibility**

■ **Severity of Disease**

■ **Immune Evasion**



Early Data on Severity of Disease from South Africa

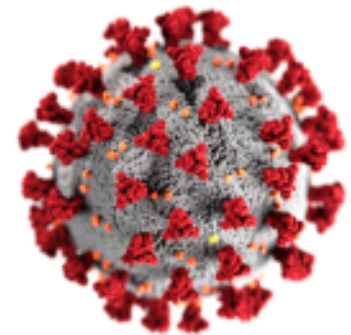
- Dec. 4, 2021 report from Steve Biko/Tshwane District Hospital Complex
- A different clinical picture compared to previous waves in S. Africa
 - 70% of COVID-19 cases did not need supplemental oxygen
 - Few patients developed COVID-19 pneumonia or required high-level care
 - Average hospital stay 2.8 days vs. 8.5 days recorded in the region over previous 18 months
 - Most serious outcomes were among unvaccinated patients

Source: samrc.sc.za, 12/4/2021



Key Omicron Unknowns

- **Transmissibility**
- **Severity of Disease**
- **Immune Evasion**



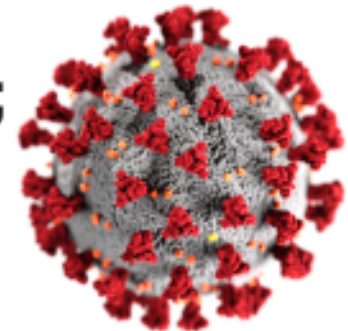
Increased Risk of SARS-CoV-2 Reinfection Associated With Emergence of the Omicron Variant in South Africa

JRC Pulliam, H Moultrie et al.

- **Omicron appears to have an increased propensity for re-infection of previously infected people, compared to the Beta and Delta variants that caused South Africa's earlier infection waves**
- **Magnitude of effect: ~3-fold greater re-infection risk**

Examples of Research Underway/ Planned to Answer Key Questions

- **Laboratory studies to determine how well sera from people who were vaccinated and/or previously infected neutralize the Omicron variant**
 - Live-virus assays + pseudovirus assays looking at immune responses
 - Sera from vaccinees who received licensed and EUA vaccines, in different doses, with and without boosts
 - Tests of susceptibility to monoclonal antibodies and antivirals
- **Studies in animal models to evaluate immune protection from vaccines and previous infection; disease pathogenesis; efficacy of antivirals**
- **Epidemiological and clinical studies**





THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

WH.GOV