

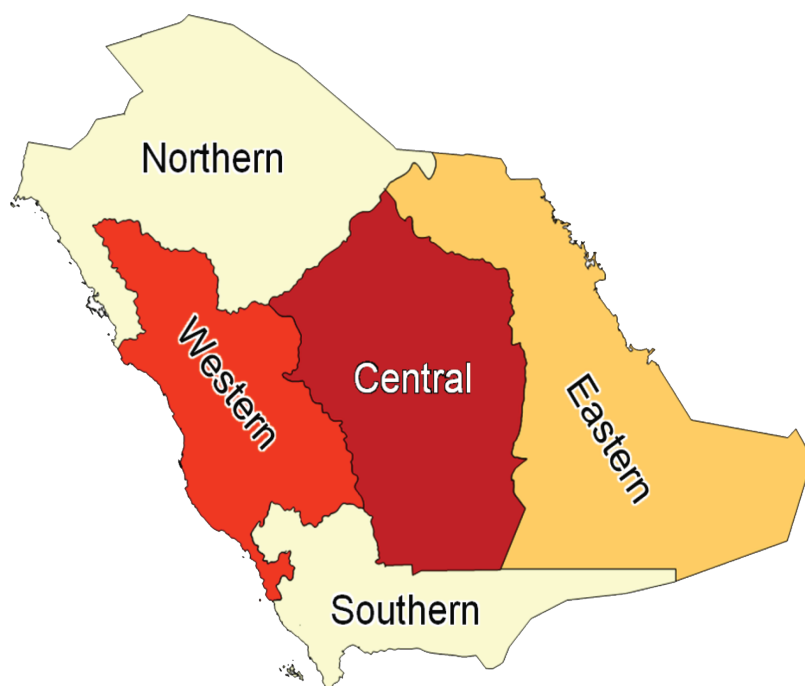
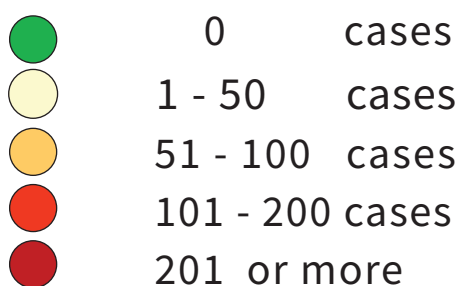
Candida Auris in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Current Situation Report

Introduction :

Candida auris (C.auris) is identified as one of the *Candida* species that poses a global health threat and recently has been associated with healthcare-associated infections and outbreaks incidence among healthcare settings. It was first discovered as a novel *Candida* species in 2009. It easily colonizes surfaces in healthcare facilities despite regular hospital disinfection, and it leads to various healthcare invasive infections associated with high morbidity & mortality consequences. It is considered a multi-drug resistant species, with variable resistance patterns to many typical antifungal agents used to treat other *Candida* infections. A concerted global action is thus needed to successfully tackle the challenges created by this emerging fungal pathogen. In order to conduct preventive measures to eradicate this microorganism, it is significant to have insight into the current situation at the national level. Consequently, this brief report has been constructed by the General Directorate of Infection Prevention and Control (GDIPC) to explore the number of *C. auris* cases that have been reported in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) from different healthcare facilities. All data included in this report was extracted from GDIPC national electronic platform from 2019 to the first quarter of 2023 time frame.

C. auris Tracking Data :

The number of C.auris cases from 2019 to the 1st quarter of 2023 :



Region	Total C. auris Cases
 Central	379
 Northern	18
 Eastern	70
 Southern	23
 Western	169

In general, the above data is summarized in a map and data table which includes *C. auris* cases from 2019 till the first quarter of 2023. All the above-posted information demonstrated that the highest number of *C. auris* cases were in the Central and Western regions of KSA at 379, and 169 respectively. Following by the Eastern and Southern regions. However, the least reported *C. auris* cases were in the Northern region at 18 cases.

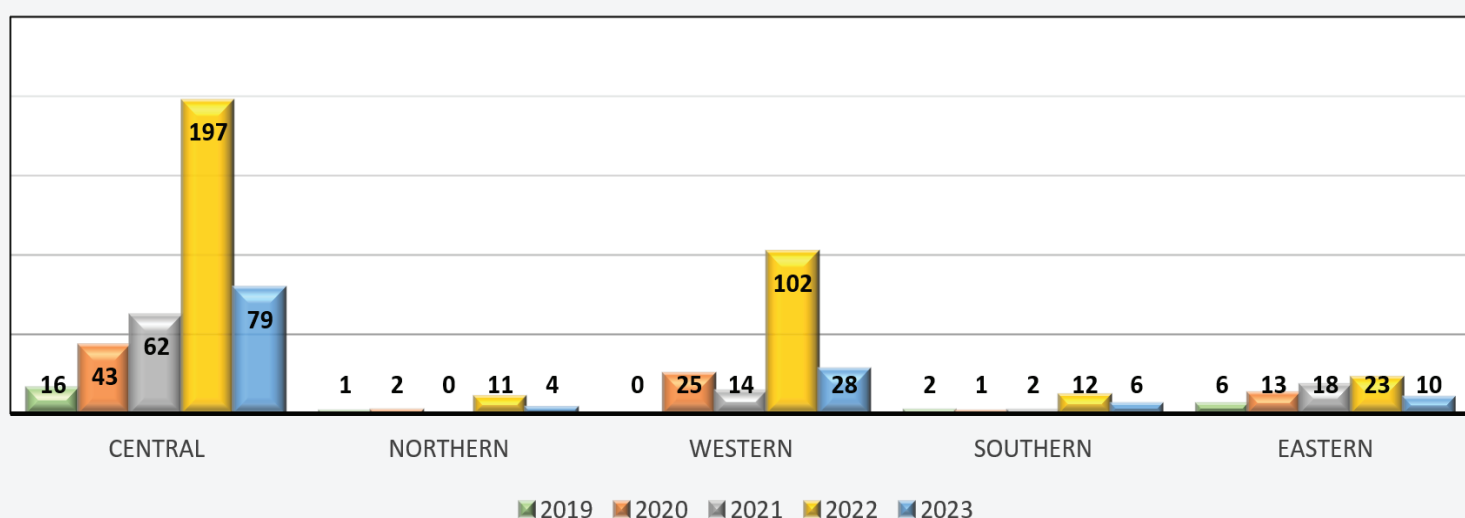
These fluctuations in the reported cases among national regions could be related to various contributed factors. For instance, in the Northern & Southern regions low reported cases may be due to the lack of laboratory identification methods which lead to the inability of recognition of this yeast and uncertainty.

Furthermore, the inadequate level of awareness about *Candida auris* among healthcare workers and its related investigation and management approaches led to poor surveillance & reporting of the same infected cases.

However, in the Central and Western regions, there were competent in their reporting process of *C.auris* cases, as these regions are considered to have the largest well-constructed healthcare facilities with available resources that are required for accurate identification & detection of this fungus. Additionally, the availability of qualified healthcare practitioners and their awareness activities regarding infection prevention and control required measures that facilitate the effective reporting of this organism as the first step in responding to it.

Total Number of C. auris Cases Among KSA Regions :

The Total Annual Number of C. Auris Cases Among KSA Regions from 2019 to 1st Quarter of 2023



From the above chart, it is obvious that a gradual increase in the number of C. auris cases and particularly among Central, Western and Eastern regions. However, it was clear in the Northern and Southern, regions with a prominent escalation in the number of C. auris in the year of 2022. Overall, C. auris reported effectively in the last recent years 2022 & 2023 respectively.

GDIPC Response to Candida auris :

Candida auris has emerged as a multidrug-resistant yeast pathogen with the capacity for easy transmission between patients and hospitals, as well as persistence on environmental surfaces. It is associated with high mortality, healthcare-associated infection outbreaks, long hospital stays, and increasing healthcare costs. In addition to the difficulty documented in the proper identification, incorrect management and treatment failure are associated with negative health consequences.

In conclusion, after analyzing the situation in this report among various kingdoms' regions, GDIPC firmly decides to take further steps and raise its intervention towards preventing and controlling Candida auris through comprehensive prevention approaches. Accordingly, GDIPC constructs a national Candida Auris Prevention Strategies (CAPS) project to participate in the reduction of Candida auris rate at different national levels through well-proven and defined prevention & control measures.