



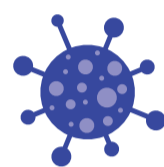
HEALTH UPDATE

Primary care is at the «limit of the humanly possible»

The referring doctors attend to around fifty daily visits, including covid and other pathologies

The COMA launches a section on its website to help the population to «self-guide» the disease

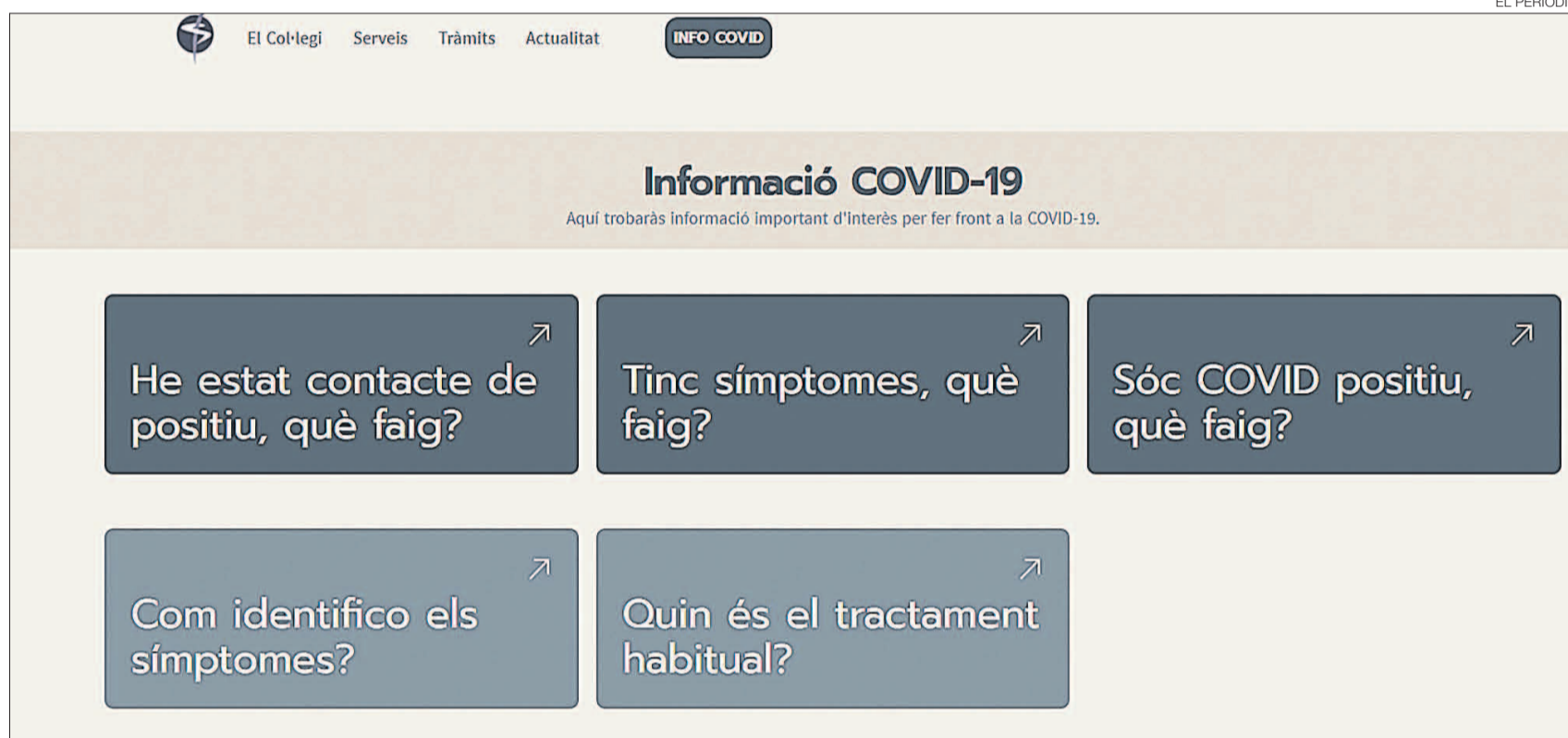
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Primary care is currently at the «limit of humanly possible», in the words of the treasurer of the Official College

of Physicians (COMA), Xavier Avellanet. As a result of the explosion of the omicron variant in the country, consultations with the referring doctor have multiplied to «overflowing» levels that are about to cause a «collapse». «Each doctor attends about 50 daily visits, both in person and online, for both coronavirus and other pathologies, but the majority, 70%, have to do with covid-19», said COMA member Roser Bellmunt. The president, Meritxell Cosan, for her part, predicted that despite «the day has no more hours» to care for all the sick, the number of cases will rise in the coming days and estimates that by the end of the week it will go from the current 3,300 positive cases to over 4,000. She also warned that the situation could last a couple of weeks, given that «neither Catalonia nor us - and they are about 10 days ahead - have not reached the peak of contagion» of this sixth wave.

Precisely with the aim of relieving the pressure on primary care, the COMA yesterday presented a section on its website that through a question-answer «self-guides» the user with symptoms or who has been in positive contact, answering possible questions and avoiding going to the doctor. «It simply came to our notice then. With this tool, they will know what guidelines to follow depending on each case», said Bellmunt, while Cosan reminded the importance of doing the tests at the right time, as «an excess of TMAs has been detected « in the plaça de braus. «Sometimes we panic and as soon as we know we're in



► Screenshot of the new section on the COMA website to «self-guide» covid positives and their contacts.

contact with a positive, we get tested, but we may not have incubated the virus yet and it creates a false sense of security», she said. In fact, according to doctors, many of the visits are purely informative, so from today they can be resolved by answering the online survey. Bellmunt also emphasized that this new section links to the platform that ma-

nages the CASS discharge, in order to avoid the accumulation of «bureaucratic work» of the referring doctor who «takes time to devote to health care». Bellmunt also pointed out that between 15 and 20% of the infected population will suffer from persistent covid and, for this reason, the Ministry of Health has created a questionnaire that will be sent auto-

matically to all positives after three months of having passed the disease and thus have a reference on this incidence in the Principality.

VACCINATION AND MANAGEMENT // Both Cosan and Avellanet i Bellmunt acknowledged that there was a general «confidence» that vaccination would allow group immunization

and that, in the end, «it was not.» «It is true, however, that it has helped to keep the pressure on the hospital, and it is also true that no one expected the omicron variant [...] Luckily, when it arrived, we already had 80% of the population vaccinated», admitted Cosan.

As for the management of the government, Avellanet considered that «there is no country in the world that has done so in a model way and it would not be ethical to criticize only specific mistakes.» For him, the only «recipe» to end the pandemic is to «shut down the entire world population for 15 days, but that's impossible.» Thus, the COMA called for responsibility, following the measures decreed and making use of its new website to allow professionals to deal only with the most serious cases. ≡

Health detects 300 new positives and more than 3,300 active ones

►► In the last few hours, the Ministry of Health has detected 300 new coronavirus positives. These infections translate into a further significant increase in active cases, which stand at 3,312,168 more than in the last health update. In terms of recoveries, the

total figure is 21,349. In terms of hospital pressure, there are 13 people (+1) admitted to the plant and 14 to the ICU, 10 of whom are under mechanical ventilation. As for the school population, there are still 34 classrooms under passive surveillance and deaths remain

at 141, following the death of a 77-year-old man on Monday. Finally, 136,916 vaccines have been administered since the beginning of the vaccination plan, of which 57,570 correspond to the first dose, 56,392 to the second and 22,954 to the third.

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TOURISM

Hoteliers feel «uncertain» about the impact of the sixth wave

New Year's Eve occupancy is close to 90% and the average number of holidays is 77%, according to the UHA

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Hotels are struggling with the current state of the pandemic. Although local tourists are responding, the impact of the sixth wave has complicated the progression of a winter that the sector started «with hope» and confesses that «we have fallen back into uncertainty.» This was stated by the president of the Hotel Union of Andorra (UHA), Jordi París, who referred mainly to two elements that «are complicating the management of hotels, now and for the future». In particular, París explained that hotel establishments are experiencing pressure from the «surge» impact of the sixth wave, in the first place, due to staff layoffs, and as they have been able to feel from the entity by their associated in the constant exchanges they maintain. And secondly, hoteliers are also worried about the volume

The association had estimated an average of 83% for the holidays, but the cancellations did not allow it to arrive

of cancellations and the lack of reservations beyond the second half of January. «After Reis, sales have stopped», said the president, who stressed that «this context is not like the normal situation of pre-pandemic, because at this time there should be reservations for the second half of January, and even for February and March». «We are concerned about this», París acknowledged.

Beyond the effects of the sixth wave and the incidence of the omicron variant in the country and neighboring states, the UHA president also recalled that a number of limitations still exist in the markets, as is the case of the UHA, Eastern Europe or Israel, whose clientele is not arriving this year. In short, París shared that «after starting the winter with a lot of confidence, we now feel a moderate optimism.»

At the same time, the UHA made public before yesterday the balance of occupancy of the associated hotels during the New Year's weekend, where it was revealed that the average between December 27 and December January 1 had been 89.31%. «Looking at the almost 90% occupancy rate for New Year's Eve, the assessment is positive, but we think it



► Some visitors take a picture in the capital.



Jordi París
PRESIDENT OF THE UHA



«This context is not like the normal pre-pandemic situation, because there should be reservations even for February and March»

«After a very confident start to the winter, we now have moderate optimism. We have fallen back into uncertainty»

could have been more», said the association's president. The UHA also shared that the overall average for the Christmas holidays, including data for the Christmas weekend and last week, was 77.60%, around which París stated that «we are satisfied, considering how complicated the winter has been». It should be noted that the organization had planned an overall average of the holidays of approximately 83%, but noted that «we accused a series of cancellations in the first part that has made the average of the whole period is a little shorter than we expected».

In any case, this first week of the year coincides with the celebration of the Day of the Three Kings, which is celebrated in the Principa-



► The Grau Roig sector.

Grandvalira and Ordino Arcalis, in the top five favorite stations

► The Grandvalira and Ordino Arcalis stations have been ranked among the top five best rated by Spanish customers. This emerges from a survey conducted by the portal and ski travel agency Esquiades.com, which gathered the opinion of more than 40,000 users. Specifically, Grandvalira was in fourth place in the ranking, with an overall rating of 8.2. Respondents rated the privileged views and the good condition of the snow as the best aspects of the Andorran domain. Ordino Arcalis then placed 8.1 points. In this regard, users highlighted the respect for the natural environment, as no hotels have been built around it. It is worth mentioning that the slopes of Vallnord-Pal Arinsal were evaluated with an 8. The first places in the survey were occupied by Les Trois Vallées (8.8), Val Thorens and Orelle (8.5) and Baqueira Beret (8.3).

lity and also in Spain, and thanks to which and according to the president of the UHA «we have an optimal situation». Also, the forecast of new snowfalls expected today will also help to attract tourists who love snow sports, and consequently, customers for hotels.

In any case, París emphasized the fact that, within the UHA itself, «some hotels have suffered more cancellations than others». «The tourist fabric and the people who are received, as well as each establishment, are different», said the president, who stated that from the UHA «we are aware that some will be suffering more than others» the current situation of the tourism and accommodation sector in the global coronavirus pandemic. ≡

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