COVID–19

Omicron in the community: what this means for you

February 2022

Phases for response to Omicron

	Phase One There are some cases in the community but we continue to stamp it out	Phase Two Cases have spread in the community so we need to minimise and slow further spread and assist our vulnerable communities	Phase Three There are thousands of cases per day: most people will self-manage and health and social services focus on families and communities that have the highest needs
Things you can do to protect yourself at ALL phases:	*Get your COVID Booster shot 5-11 year olds first vaccination*	*Continue to Mask, Scan and Pass wherever you go*	*Good hygiene, physical distancing and stay home if unwell*
Testing	• PCR test for people that have symptoms and close contacts at GP or Community Testing Centre • PCR testing for international arrivals • Find testing sites closest to you here: Healthpoint.co.nz	• Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) may be used in addition to PCR testing for symptomatic people and close contacts • Critical worker close contact exemption scheme begins: asymptomatic healthcare and critical workforce who are close contacts test daily using RATs. • PCR testing to confirm diagnosis if positive RAT.	• Due to so many cases per day, focus of PCR testing is on priority populations • Symptomatic people may use a RAT for diagnosis – positive test results do not need to be confirmed with a PCR unless advised • RATs available at a variety of locations, depending on reason for testing, including Community Testing Centres/Pick Up Points, GPs, pharmacies, community providers or workplaces • Close Contact Exemption Scheme using RATS for asymptomatic healthcare and critical workforce who are household contacts.
Case investigation and contact tracing	Cases contacted as usual. Cases: • Identified via positive PCR test • Notified by phone call and phone based case investigation Contacts: • Active management of close contacts • Close contacts notified by phone call • Push notifications (QR scanning), Bluetooth and locations of interest used to identify contacts.	**Digital technology is utilised more as cases grow – text via mobile phone and information via email. Support for those not digitally enabled.** Cases: • Identified via positive PCR test • Notified by text and directed to complete COVID-19 Contact Tracing form online • Self-investigation tool increasingly targeting high-risk exposures (events or locations) • Phone based interviews where required • Household contacts identified, test required on days 3 and 8, or if symptomatic Contacts: • Regular communication with household contacts • Non-household Close Contacts notified via text, self-manage, test on day 5 or when symptomatic • Push notifications (QR scanning), Bluetooth and Locations of Interest used to identify contacts • Close Contact Exemption Scheme using RATS for critical infrastructure workers if needed.	**Digital technology continues – a self-serve model – with cases supported to self-notify close contacts. Focus on support for those not digitally enabled.** Cases: • Identified via positive PCR or RATs or symptoms. • Notified by text and directed to complete COVID-19 Contact Tracing form online • Self-investigation tool targets very high-risk exposures, narrowing the numbers of contacts identified • Symptomatic household contacts a probable case, test not required. Contacts: • Contacts automatically notified from online self-investigation and option for cases to self-notify their contacts. • Only highest risk contacts will be traced and required to isolate • Limited use of push notifications, locations of interest or Bluetooth • Close Contact Exemption Scheme using RATS for asymptomatic healthcare and critical infrastructure workforce who are household contacts.
Isolation & Quarantine	Cases: • Isolate for 14 days Contacts: • Isolate for 10 days • Extra support in place for health and critical workforces.	Cases: • Isolate for 10 days (self-release after 10 days) Household contacts of a Case: • Isolate until case completes 10 days. Test on Day 3 and Day 8 of the case's isolation, or if symptomatic Close Contacts: • Isolate for 7 days. Test Day 5 or if symptomatic • Extra support in place for health and critical workforces.	Cases: • Isolate for 10 days (self-release after 10 days) Household contacts of a Case: • Isolate until case completes 10 days. Test on Day 3 and Day 10 of the case's isolation, or if symptomatic. Close Contacts: • No requirement to isolate. Self-monitor for 10 days and test if symptomatic. • Extra support in place for health and critical workforces.
Health and social support - Care in the Community	• **Begin shift to self-service - text/online** • Some positive cases using self-service tools. such as online contact forms • Clinical care will be delivered by primary care teams, supported by the local care coordination hub. • All steps taken to support positive cases to isolate in their usual place of residence, with alternative accommodation options across the regions.	• **Cases using self-service where possible, ensure those with greatest need are being met** • Support by local care coordination hub for those with a need for ongoing clinical care. • Other people with lower clinical risks, may contact external providers. • Support for most positive cases to isolate in their usual place of residence. Alternative accommodation options across the regions are still available.	• **Majority of positive cases are self-management.** • Clinical care is focused on anyone with high-needs • Wraparound health and welfare support services will focus on those who need it most • Support for positive cases to isolate in their usual place of residence and unlikely there will be alternative accommodation capacity available for cases that are unable to safely isolate at home.

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
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