

## MEDIA RELEASE

23 January 2022

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### **One new case and Omicron confirmed in Nelson Tasman**

The Ministry of Health has confirmed one new case to report in the Nelson Tasman region. This person is a close contact of the existing nine cases and has been in quarantine during their infectious period.

Whole genome sequencing on the 9 cases reported over the past two days has confirmed it is the Omicron variant. The Air New Zealand crew member announced yesterday has also been confirmed as having the same Omicron variant.

Dr Stephen Bridgman, Nelson Marlborough Health, Medical Office of Health said, “While we have seen an increase in testing since the announcement with 205 tests on Friday and 172 on Saturday, we are interested in seeing these numbers grow.

We are concerned about possible undetected transmission in the community. It is important to have the right people getting tested. This means if you have no symptoms or have not been to a location of interest please don't get tested.

We do expect the number of cases and therefore the locations of interest to grow. These will continue to be updated on the Ministry of Health website alongside advice.

The National strategy to Omicron at this stage remains to slow down spread through testing, contact tracing, and isolation. Public health measures such as mask wearing, social distancing and hand-washing are key to reducing the risk of infection.

These combined measures allow as much time as possible for people to receive their vaccinations and booster vaccinations. Vaccination has a huge effect on reducing the likelihood of hospitalisation and serious disease. It also reduces transmission of the virus. People are strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated and to have a booster when eligible.

On Friday and Saturday we had 1585 vaccinations occur across Nelson Marlborough. The Nelson and Richmond vaccination sites have increased hours to 8pm to allow for the anticipated increase in demand.”

Eric Sinclair, Health Controller for Nelson Marlborough Health confirmed health services will continue to operate as usual under the red traffic light system.

**-END-**

#### **Location of interest**

Nelson Tasman residents and visitors are asked to monitor Ministry of Health's locations of interest page, and follow the instructions given on that page if you've been at a location of interest. There is a list on this page and also a map for quick-reference: [COVID-19: Contact tracing locations of interest | Ministry of Health NZ](#)  
Marlborough residents and visitors should monitor this page also if they have travelled to the Nelson Tasman region in the past 14 days.

## When and where to get tested

We ask anyone with symptoms – no matter how mild – to please get tested, even if they are vaccinated. Read about symptoms to be alert to on the Ministry of Health website: [About COVID-19 symptoms and spread | Ministry of Health NZ](#)

COVID-19 test locations:

- i) Walk-in, no appointments needed
  - a. CBAC hours will be kept up to date on the Healthpoint website and on the Nelson Marlborough Health website: [www.nmdhb.govt.nz](http://www.nmdhb.govt.nz)
  - b. Additional pop-up test sites in Nelson Tasman will be listed on those websites also

### **Nelson CBAC: Saxton Field parking area, Suffolk Rd, Stoke**

- Daily (Monday-Sunday) 9am-6pm

### **Motueka Pop-up testing centre, Motueka Recreation Centre, Old Wharf Road, Motueka**

- Today Sunday 23 9am-4pm, Monday 24 January 9am-5pm

- ii) By appointment at medical centres (GP) please phone ahead first

All locations and hours available on the Healthpoint website. Find an option closest to you: [COVID-19 Testing • Blenheim, Nelson Marlborough • Healthpoint](#)

## Vaccination advice

People living in Marlborough, Nelson, and Tasman are reminded to get vaccinated if they have not already. Everyone aged 5 years and over is eligible for free COVID-19 vaccination. Booster doses are also now available to anyone aged 18+ who had their second dose 4 month ago.

[Vaccination clinic locations across the region are listed on Healthpoint here.](#)

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