

## MEDIA RELEASE

16 February 2022

<i>These numbers are as of 10.30 am on Wednesday 16 February.</i>	Nelson/Tasman	Marlborough	Total
New Active - Confirmed	10	2	12
New Active - Probable	3	-	3
Total Active - Confirmed and Probable	28	4	32
Recovered (since 20 January)	22	1	23

### Testing remains the back-bone of the Phase Two approach

A further two schools have been identified as impacted by COVID-19 with the Public Health team working closing with the Ministry of Education and Nayland College and Victory Primary School.

**Dr Stephen Bridgman, Medical Officer of Health, Nelson Marlborough Health** said, “The Nelson Marlborough community did a fantastic job in Phase One of ‘stamping out’ Omicron. This delayed the spread of infection in the community meaning more people were able to get boosted and prepared.

“We know that we cannot stop Omicron. The escalation of cases in Nelson over the past two days shows how quickly it can spread and how disruptive it can be to workplaces and schools. It also shows how prepared education and workplaces are in supporting employees, students and communities through Omicron.

“In Phase Two ‘flatten the curve’ the focus is on minimising and slowing the further spread of Omicron. This phase looks to empower those who are able to utilise a digital pathway, meaning resources can be targeted to those who need support.

“We know that for most people Omicron will be a mild to moderate illness and can be self-managed, as people would other winter respiratory illnesses. This means people can isolate at home with over the counter medicines such as paracetamol and throat lozenges.

“The key is early diagnosis of Omicron through a PCR test. Testing remains important in Phase Two as it allows people who are positive to be supported either through a self-managed pathway or supported pathway.

“Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms should be presenting for testing, even if you are vaccinated. Community testing stations are in place in Nelson and Blenheim.

“Please bring your mask and phone when you go for a test. This allows you to protect staff, scan in to the QR codes located on site, and staff can check that your phone will receive the text notification of your COVID-19 test result.

“If you know your NHI number this can help speed up the process. You can call 0800 855 066 to find your NHI number and can store it on your COVID-19 Tracer App for easy access.

“In Phase Two rapid antigen testing (RAT) becomes available for specific groups. For example, employees at a registered critical services who are identified as a close contact but are vaccinated and asymptomatic.

“The employee would need a negative test before going to work each day to maintain critical services. Outside of work they would still need isolate. If at any point they became symptomatic they would need to complete a PCR test.”

**Lexie O’Shea, Chief Executive, Nelson Marlborough Health** said, “We know there is anxiety as Phase Two becomes a reality for us, our whānau and our communities.

What you do to prepare your household and your whānau will make an impact. Together we can protect our health system over the coming weeks and months.

“In particular thank you to those who have taken the opportunity to get boosted. It is not too late to vaccinate.”

**ENDS**

### **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](#)

### **COVID-19 testing locations**

Community Based Assessment Centres (CBAC) hours will be kept up-to-date on the Healthpoint website:

[Nelson Marlborough COVID-19 CBACs | HealthPoint](#)

All locations and hours available on the Healthpoint website **including by appointment opportunities at medical centres (GP), please phone ahead first:**

[COVID-19 Testing | 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 3 months ago.

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

### **Contact:**

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