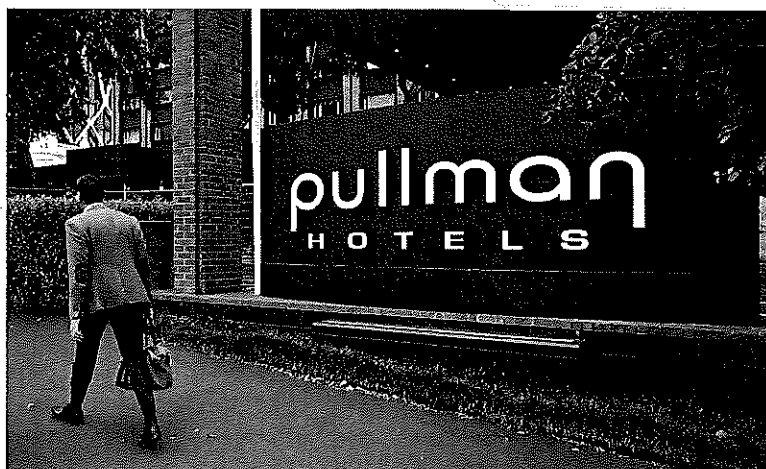


New Zealand

New Zealand reports local Covid case linked to Pullman hotel outbreak

(Hunt, 2021)

27 Jan 2021



▲ The latest case of coronavirus in New Zealand is linked to the Pullman hotel outbreak in Auckland. Photograph: Phil Walter/Getty Images

Elle Hunt in Wellington

Thu 4 Feb 2021 02:30 GMT

A new community case of Covid-19 has been identified in New Zealand: the mother of an already diagnosed toddler.

The new case is being referred to as "person D". She is the mother of "person C", a child, who tested positive for Covid-19 in quarantine at the Pullman hotel in Auckland along with the father, "person B".

Dr Ashley Bloomfield, the director general of health, said he had a "high degree of confidence" that the woman had been isolating as a result of confirmed cases in her family and would not have transmitted the virus.

"This was a very close household contact for persons B and C ... We are not expecting any other positive results," he said.

Routine testing of the woman, as a close contact, was carried out by a mobile testing unit on 29 and 30 January, and on 1 and 2 February. The test on 2 February was positive.

Bloomfield said the contradictory results were "a good example of the variable nature" of testing and praised the health services for persevering through a negative result the preceding day.

"This is just a good example of our response - our isolation and testing follow-up system - working," said Bloomfield.

The woman would be moved to a quarantine facility in Auckland for the remainder of her illness, authorities said. Testing of other close contacts in the family unit came back negative.

Six more cases of coronavirus have been identified in managed isolation and quarantine since Wednesday - five through routine testing. The sixth was confirmed on day eight after the person started showing symptoms.

An investigation into how transmission occurred at the Pullman hotel was yet to report back, said the Covid-19 response minister Chris Hipkins.

The hotel is due to be emptied by Saturday and over the following week will have its CCTV systems upgraded, followed by a deep clean.

The death of a person in managed isolation at the Crowne Plaza hotel in Auckland on Wednesday was not addressed at the Thursday press conference but was reportedly due to a non-Covid medical incident.

On Wednesday there were three cases of Covid-19 reported in managed isolation. One was classified as historical and deemed not infectious.