

Update on COVID-19 cases — 24 February 2022

24 Feb 2022

Read today's update on COVID-19 cases and Omicron from the Ministry of Health.

Today's COVID-19 numbers

- 6,137 new community cases
- 8 new cases identified at the border
- 205 cases in hospital
- 29,805 total tests in the last 24 hours
- 2,248,153 booster doses

Update from the Ministry of Health

Increasing numbers of cases and hospitalisations are another reminder that vaccination is our best defence against the virus.

There is growing evidence that three doses of Pfizer is protective against infection and symptomatic infection for Omicron.

We are strongly encouraging people to get a booster dose if it has been more than three months since their second dose.

There were 24,632 booster doses administered across the motu yesterday and overall, around 68.2% of the eligible population have received a booster dose.

Positive rapid antigen test reporting

The total number of cases reported will now include those identified from both RATs and PCR tests. A breakdown gives how many cases were identified using PCR and how many through RATs.

Today's figure will include cases identified with RATs in the same midnight-to-midnight reporting period used for reporting positive PCR tests.

The Omicron public health response during Phase Two and Three operates on more devolved model to ensure health resources are focused on those who need it most. It is very important to the overall response that people self-report positive results for RATs, so we understand the size of the outbreak.

We'd like to thank the thousands of people who have already self-reported positive RAT results.

Based on overseas experiences, the Ministry of Health has been expecting the true number of community cases to be higher than the cases reported each day and this has been factored into our Omicron planning.

When assessing the outbreak, health officials typically review trends in the 7-day rolling average of community cases to understand the spread of the virus, as well as hospitalisations to understand severe COVID-19 illness and related impacts on the health system. Because we focus on the actual trend, any potential 'undercount' doesn't significantly impact our assessment of the trend, and subsequent public health advice and decision-making.

Further information on RATs will be reported in coming days.

