

## What does self-management practically mean?

- ❖ Most people will be able to manage themselves at home through Omicron
- ❖ Only confirmed cases and household contacts will need to isolate
- ❖ Other contacts need to monitor their symptoms and only isolate if they're unwell
- ❖ RAT testing will be the main testing form and will be available through testing centres, GPs and Chemists (free) and at retail outlets from March for purchase
- ❖ If you test positive, you need to register at My COVID Record online and complete a self-assessment form
- ❖ Positive cases will isolate at home for 10 days and do a test on day 3 and 10
- ❖ Household contacts will isolate at home for 10 days and do a test on day 3 and 10
- ❖ Many people simply won't be officially diagnosed with COVID-19
- ❖ The health system will only focus on our very sick and vulnerable
- ❖ People will need to ask for additional health care or welfare support
- ❖ Mask, scanning and vaccination passes will still be used, along with restrictions around numbers in gatherings, etc
- ❖ Continue to practice good hand hygiene and social distancing – especially inside
- ❖ There will be an ongoing focus on vaccination and boosters

## What does this actually mean for me?

- ❖ If you're sick, stay at home until you either have a negative test or your symptoms are long gone (about 10 days)
- ❖ Register your positive test through My COVID Record and complete the online forms
- ❖ Make sure you have enough food, medication and other provisions to get you and your whānau through an isolation/positive period
- ❖ Connect with your neighbors and friends and organise mutual support i.e., contactless dropping off kai or medicines if you need to isolate

- ❖ Make a list of your emergency contacts
- ❖ Make a poster you can put on your letterbox or front door (or download one of ours) to let manuhiri know you're isolating
- ❖ Ask for help if you need it
- ❖ If you start feeling very unwell and/or can't breathe, call 111 immediately.

## How long do positive cases need to isolate?

Ten days.

## What's the difference between a close contact and a household close contact?

You're classified as a close contact if you've had contact with a person with COVID-19 when they were infectious. You're automatically a household close contact if you live in the same whare with someone who has tested positive.

Going forward, close contacts no longer need to self-isolate, but they do need to monitor their symptoms and get a test and self-isolate if they feel unwell. The Close Contact Exemption Scheme will apply for those who are critical workers.

If you're a household contact, you will need to isolate until the positive person in your whare has been isolating for 10 days and you will also need to do a test on day 3 and 10.

## So what does this mean? What do I need to do if I'm a close contact?

Now, if you are a Close Contact, you don't need to isolate but you do need to monitor your symptoms closely and isolate and get a test if you feel unwell. The Close Contact Exemption scheme will apply for those who are critical workers.

## What happens if someone in my whare tests positive?

Household contacts isolate with the positive case for ten days and until none of you have any new or worsening symptoms - see our factsheet on how to prepare your whare for safe isolating, while our self-management factsheet will help guide you through. If you're a household contact you'll need to do a test on day 3 and 10.

## How will I know if I'm a close contact?

This could happen many different ways:

- ❖ You might get a text notification and be given a link to the Contact Tracing form online
- ❖ You receive a Bluetooth notification
- ❖ You were at a Location of Interest, as published on the Ministry of Health website
- ❖ Someone you are close to tests positive, and they let you know you are a Close Contact
- ❖ You receive notification from your education provider or workplace

See above for what to do if you are a close contact.

## Do critical workers have to isolate if they are a close contact?

Critical infrastructure/healthcare workers will be able to continue working under the 'Close Contact Exemption Scheme' and 'Bubble of One' - more information here. Their business needs to be registered as a critical service.

If you're feeling well, have been identified as a close contact, are fully vaccinated, are a critical worker, and need to get a test, you can get RATs from one of the collection sites listed on Healthpoint as part of the Close Contact Exemption Scheme. Under this scheme, if you have a negative RATs test you will be able to go to work

## What information and tools are available to help me self-manage?

A new secure, online portal has been set up - the COVID-19 Health Hub which has heaps of advice and information for cases and contacts.

The portal has contact tracing forms, health assessments and more that can adapt for disabilities, different languages, and different digital devices. For most people, the portal will be the main source to guide us through. Once you register a positive test through My COVID Record, you will receive access to this hub.

## What if I don't have access to digital/ online? Or I have trouble using it?

There is always support available for those who cannot get online. If you don't have online access, please call your local GP, Healthline on 0800 611 116, or if you are feeling very unwell, call 111.

## Will I get a wage subsidy if I need to isolate?

If your income has been affected by COVID-19, you may be able to apply for financial support. If you cannot work from home, your employer can apply for the COVID-19 Short-term Absence Payment so you can continue to get paid. You can also apply if you are self-employed, need to look after a dependent child, or live with someone who has been at a location of interest and are awaiting test results.

More on financial eligibility [here](#).

## How long will we be responsible for looking after ourselves through COVID?

Most New Zealanders now know how to take care of themselves and their whānau, and we have new online tools to support that. Depending on any new strains of the virus, we'll probably keep looking after ourselves for the foreseeable future.

## Why are we moving to a new independent or self-management approach?

COVID-19 isn't going away - we are now focused on minimising and slowing the spread. This means our communities, health system and welfare organisations can target support where it is most needed.

## What happened to 'Stamp it out'?

When COVID first hit our shores, we simply weren't ready for it! So, our strategy was about eliminating it so we could do all the work that needed to be done in the background. But we also knew from the overseas experiences that different strains and the re-opening of our border would increase case numbers. The extremely transmissible nature of Omicron means elimination just isn't possible. Our goal has been to slow it down so New Zealanders have everything in place to self-manage it.

## Can I get Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs)?

RATs will increasingly be our main form of testing. They are free and available from the main testing sites or some chemists. You will soon be able to buy these from retail outlets as well.

## Who makes sure people are self-managing correctly?

Isolation is a legal requirement. Some legislation is in place that includes isolation and testing requirements for cases and close contacts during this self-management approach.

## Why don't close contacts need to isolate now – is this safe for our community?

Because we have such high vaccination rates and we know how to manage COVID ourselves. People who are close contacts just need to monitor their symptoms carefully and get a test and self-isolate if they start feeling unwell.

## Will self-management make our community more vulnerable?

If we all follow the rules, self-isolate when we are positive or a household contact, get tested and get vaccinated, we will be able to keep our vulnerable people safe and ensure health and welfare services can focus on them.

## What happens to the CIQ accommodation?

MIQ will still be used for some international travellers, especially those from countries other than Australia and if people are not New Zealand citizens. Community Isolation sites (CIQ), will still be used to support whānau who are not able to safely self-isolate at home, for example, if they have very vulnerable people in their whare.

