

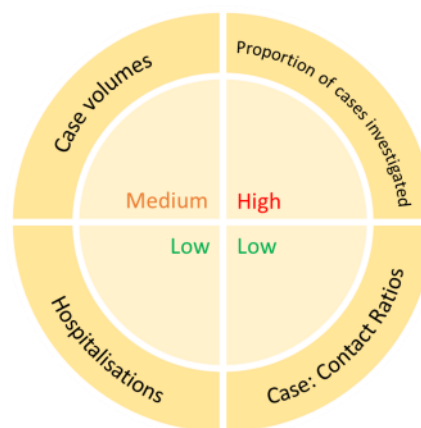
## Allied Health sector update re the Omicron Strategy



Kia ora koutou,

### Responding to Omicron: we are at Phase 1

- Situation: A few cases in the community, but most cases connected.
- Objectives: contain and eliminate.

This third sector update provides you with any relevant information discussed at Friday's drop-in session, including the testing and returning to work during Omicron response guidance for critical workers.



Topic	Response
<p><b>What changes at each phase of the Omicron response?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testing</li> <li>• Case investigation &amp; contact tracing</li> <li>• Isolation &amp; quarantine</li> <li>• Care in the Community</li> <li>• Masks</li> </ul>	<p>The most recent guidance is now available (last updated 31 January 2022).</p> <p>Please see attached high-level dashboards outlining the operational changes to respond to Omicron.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">               Appendix One_ Phases of operation         </div> <div style="text-align: center;">               Appendix One_ Operational change         </div> </div>
<p><b>Where do I find the Risk Assessment for Health Care Workers exposed to COVID-19?</b></p> <p>Link on website:  <a href="https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-health-professionals/guidance-critical-health-services-during-omicron-outbreak">https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-health-professionals/guidance-critical-health-services-during-omicron-outbreak</a></p>	<p>The most recent guidance is now available (31 January 2022).</p> <p>Assessment of risk can be found at  <a href="https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/guidance-for-healthcare-workers-who-are-covid19-cases-or-contacts-during-an-omicron-outbreak-31jan2022.pdf">https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/guidance-for-healthcare-workers-who-are-covid19-cases-or-contacts-during-an-omicron-outbreak-31jan2022.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Test to Return scheme for Critical Workers</b></p> <p>Link on Business.govt.nz website:  <a href="https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/testing-and-returning-to-work-">https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/testing-and-returning-to-work-</a></p>	<p>To ensure that sufficient workers are available to maintain critical infrastructure and supply chains throughout the Omicron outbreak, a critical services registration system will prioritise allocation of Rapid Antigen Tests to businesses and provide for return-to-work testing for asymptomatic close</p>

<p><a href="https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/testing-and-returning-to-work-during-omicron/">during-omicron/?utm_source=Newsletter&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=EC_January_26_2022_Omicron&amp;utm_content=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.business.govt.nz%2F-covid-19%2Ftesting-and-returning-to-work-during-omicron%2F</a></p> <p>Factsheet for business is also available:  <a href="https://www.business.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/testing-and-returning-to-work-during-omicron-response-guide-for-businesses.pdf">https://www.business.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/testing-and-returning-to-work-during-omicron-response-guide-for-businesses.pdf</a></p>	<p>contacts who would otherwise be required to self-isolate.</p> <p>Government agencies will, over the coming week, proactively engage with key businesses in their sectors to ensure that critical workforces have been identified and registered, and that there are sufficient supplies of Rapid Antigen Tests for those workers when needed.</p> <p>Beyond this, MBIE will develop an online portal – similar to that used for the Business Travel Registration system – to allow businesses to apply for critical worker status. This system will be called the Critical Services Register and more information will be made available to businesses shortly about this.</p> <p>The Critical Services Register will hold a database of the critical workforce by sector and location. This information will be used by the Ministry of Health to allocate Rapid Antigen Tests depending on supply and need, including the geographical spread of any outbreak.</p> <p>Delivery of Rapid Antigen Tests will be managed by the Ministry of Health to ensure necessary storage and handling protocols are maintained.</p>
<p><b>Rapid Antigen Testing:</b> access &amp; supply to businesses for surveillance testing</p> <p><i>Note: surveillance testing differs to return-to-work testing for asymptomatic close contacts who would otherwise be required to self-isolate.</i></p>	<p>Rapid Antigen Testing guides for business are available below. These documents will continue to change as we gather feedback and improve processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Rapid antigen testing - Guide for Businesses (PDF, 1.7 MB)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Protocols for general staff management following a positive RAT result (PDF, 74 KB)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rapid Antigen Testing requirements and processes (PDF, 193 KB)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Testing Steps (PDF, 509 KB)</a></li> </ul> <p>Rapid antigen tests are an option for businesses in their response to COVID-19. Workers can continue, and may be required, to be tested under</p>

	current arrangements required by the Ministry under the Required Testing and Health Orders.
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**We will keep everyone informed as much as possible, and hear what is top of mind for you:**

- Our office has held a webinar and two drop-in sessions to provide information
  - If there are any significant changes (or common issues coming through), we will schedule future sessions.
- You can expect regular weekly updates during the initial Omicron response
- Please feel free to email our office at [Sophie.Oliff@health.govt.nz](mailto:Sophie.Oliff@health.govt.nz) or [Caitlin.Yeoman@health.govt.nz](mailto:Caitlin.Yeoman@health.govt.nz)

**END.**