



# MOH, 2020c

COVID  
Timeline  
23 March 2020

## 36 new cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand

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### Media release

23 March 2020

There are 36 new cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand as at 8 am this morning. This brings the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Zealand to 102.

More details of the new cases will be provided via our website shortly and updated as new details emerge.

Of the cases today over half are directly related to overseas travel, most of the remainder are close contacts of a previously confirmed case or associated with an event where there were confirmed cases such as the Queenstown World Hereford Cattle conference. None of the cases announced today appear to relate to community transmission.

Across all cases we have two that we cannot be certain where the infection came from and are therefore treating them as community transmission. The Prime Minister will update the country later the alert level as a result of these cases.

Contact tracing for these cases is ongoing.

More than 1,100 laboratory tests were carried out yesterday, bringing the total number of completed tests to over 7400.

Most of our cases are still from people who have travelled to NZ from overseas.

An increasing number of cases are close contacts of people who have travelled from overseas.

We have our two cases of likely community transmission. This makes the core public health messages even more important: physical distancing, cough and sneeze etiquette, washing hands and more importantly not going out if you are unwell.

Also those who are over 70 years of age and people under 70 with pre-existing health conditions should look at working from home where that is possible.

All of us must play our part in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

## Physical distancing

Physical distancing is important but so is social connection. Physical distancing does not mean social distancing.

There are many ways we can continue to interact with friends and family around the country.

In fact, it's now more important than ever to remember to frequently check in with friends, family, neighbours – people can and should be doing this over the phone or online.

## Media contact

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