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MINISTRY OF HEALTH
MANATŪ HAUORA

2 border-related COVID-19 cases confirmed

Media release

27 January 2021

Two people who completed their managed isolation in the same facility and at the same time as the Northland case are now being treated as confirmed COVID-19 infections.

"While we still can't categorically rule these out as historical infections, test results so far indicate the two people may have contracted COVID-19 towards the end of their stay in managed isolation, after returning two negative tests each during their stay", said Director-General of Health Dr Ashley Bloomfield.

"It's too early to early to make a firm conclusion. Genome sequencing results, which are expected tomorrow, and serology results expected the following day, will help develop the picture further."

However, out of an abundance of caution we are now responding as if these are confirmed current infections.

Locations of interest

The Ministry of Health website has a list of exposure events which include a location, date and time. Contact tracing locations of interest (/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest).

People who have visited those locations during the time period, and as ever, anyone in Auckland with symptoms, are asked to isolate and call Healthline to arrange a test and remain isolated until they receive their result.

"It's important the right people isolate and get tested, so we don't overwhelm testing centres," said Dr Bloomfield.

"We understand that many will be anxious, but it's important to remember we are carrying out these measures as a precaution. There is no evidence so far that suggests community transmission — but we need the right people to isolate and get tested."

This will come as news to some locations of interest as we move quickly to respond and we thank them for their understanding and cooperation.

The two former returnees were initially classified as under investigation after returning positive tests and pending further investigation to determine if the infections were recent or historical. They returned a second positive test with a higher CT value which led to them being treated as confirmed cases.

A third person in the family's bubble has tested negative. The two family members who tested positive are in the process of being moved to Auckland's quarantine facility.

The two positive cases completed quarantine on 15 January and have been residing in North Auckland since.

Further interviews are being carried out to determine the family's detailed movements since they left managed isolation to identify close and casual contacts.

A number of steps have already been put in place at the Pullman hotel including:

- a deep clean of commonly used areas
- increasing hotel ventilation
- requesting returnees who've recently left, to not fly, to stay home and have an additional test within 48 hours
- restricting staff from working at other sites
- tighter restrictions on movement of returnees including no arrivals or departures from the facility.

Testing centres

A number of walk-in / drive-thru community testing centres will be open in Auckland — some with extended hours. These can be found on the ARPHS website https://www.arphs.health.nz/public-health-topics/covid-19/where-to-get-tested/ (https://www.arphs.health.nz/public-health-topics/covid-19/where-to-get-

tested/) and Healthline will have this information too.

The website also includes extra pop-up community testing centres, targeted to North Auckland.

Public health advice

In addition, Aucklanders and people travelling to the city should follow key public health advice: wash your hands; use a mask on public transport; use the NZ Covid Tracer App; if you develop symptoms, isolate and seek advice from Healthline about getting tested.

Media contact
Peter Abernethy
021 366 111 (tel:021366111)

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