
To:	General Practices, Pharmacists, After-Hours Centres and Emergency Departments in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions
From:	Dr Annette Nesdale, Medical Officer of Health
Date:	3 February 2020
Title:	National Advisory: Novel coronavirus response update 6 and 7

Please distribute the following information from the NEW ZEALAND MINISTRY OF HEALTH to relevant staff in your organisation.

National Health Advisory: Update on novel coronavirus response

1. WHO Declaration of Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)

On 31 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared 2019-nCoV to be a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).

2. Notification of suspected 2019-nCoV infection

2019-nCoV is now a New Zealand notifiable disease; in our region, cases are to be notified on suspicion to Regional Public Health (04 570 9002). Discuss with the Clinical Microbiologist if testing is being considered.

The case definition for reporting suspected 2019-nCoV infection has been adjusted and is available at:

https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/interim_health_advice_for_health_professionals_novel_coronavirus_wuhan_2020_02_03.pdf

- **Suspect case (under investigation)**

The patient is classified as a suspect case if they satisfy **both** the epidemiological and clinical criteria.

Epidemiological criteria

Travel to or from (including transit through) mainland China within 14 days before onset of illness

OR

Close contact (refer full document) in 14 days before onset of illness with a confirmed case of 2019-nCoV infection

Clinical criteria

Fever or history of fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) and acute respiratory infection with at least one of the following symptoms: shortness of breath, cough or sore throat.

- **Probable case**

A suspect case where other known aetiologies that fully explain the clinical presentation have been excluded, and for whom testing for 2019-nCoV is inconclusive or for whom testing is positive on a pan-coronavirus assay.

- **Confirmed case**

A person with laboratory confirmation of infection with 2019-nCoV.

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3. Eligibility direction

By making 2019-nCoV a notifiable disease, all those with suspected or confirmed 2019-nCoV infection have access to publicly funded health services at a level equivalent to that of NZ citizens or residents, regardless of residency or visa status, as per the Eligibility Direction.

4. Additional border measures

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) now recommend that New Zealanders do not travel to any part of mainland China. Additional measures are in place as of 2 February 2020. These measures will deny entry to NZ of all those who have left or transited through mainland China from 2 February 2020. This includes passengers in transit through NZ. The following are excluded from these measures:

- NZ citizens, permanent residents and their immediate family. This includes those from Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands
- Air crews who have been using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

ALL travellers departing from mainland China after 2 February 2020 should self-isolate for 14 days from the time they left mainland China.

Existing travellers from China already in NZ as of 2 February 2020 should self-isolate if they were in Hubei Province before leaving China; these travellers need to self-isolate for 14 days from the time they left Hubei Province.

Instructions for self-isolation are included with this Public Health Alert.

5. Alerting the health sector should a patient be confirmed with 2019-nCoV

Should a patient be confirmed with 2019-nCoV infection in New Zealand, the health sector will be alerted as soon as possible. Until then, direct your staff to the Ministry of Health guidance on personal protective equipment (PPE) and other information on 2019-nCoV:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disease-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

Information on PPE has also been circulated in Public Health Alert sent by Regional Public Health on 31 January 2020.

6. Request on media engagement

The Ministry of Health request that any statements or announcements by DHBs on 2019-nCoV should be sent in advance to the NHCC Public Information Manager at NHCC_PIM@health.govt.nz to ensure consistent messaging.

7. Diagnostic testing in New Zealand

2019-nCoV testing became available in New Zealand on 31 January 2020, at ESR. The Ministry of Health request that samples are preferentially sent to ESR as the national laboratory. A case report form for novel coronavirus is being developed and will be available soon. Clinicians are encouraged to complete the report form as thoroughly as possible.

8. DHB Expressions of Interest for health support for people being assisted to depart from Wuhan

As per media reports, a number of people are being assisted to return to New Zealand from Wuhan, China. On arrival in New Zealand, there will be requirements for health monitoring (daily temperature and wellness checks) and primary healthcare support. Health support will be required on-site for the duration of the 14-day isolation period. Expectations are for a GP and a nurse or nurse practitioner to be present at all times while on duty. The Ministry of Health is requesting expressions of interest to DHBs for staff who would be interested in providing assistance. Expressions of interest should be sent to NHCC_ExternalLog@health.govt.nz.