



Executive summary

26 July 2023

Reported case rate for the week ending 23 July decreased compared to the previous week. In the week ending 16 July, hospital admissions, viral RNA in wastewater, and mortality decreased compared to the previous week.

The XBB variants are still the most common (~58%). XBB.1.16 continues to be the most common variant ~20%, followed by FK1.1 at 19% and CH1.1 at 9%.



Key insights

National Trends

Cases

The 7-day rolling average of reported¹ case rates was 10.2 per 100,000 population for the week ending 23 July 2023. This is a decrease compared to the previous week average (11.8 per 100,000 to 16 July 2023).

Wastewater

The viral RNA in wastewater for the week ending 16 July 2023 decreased compared to the previous week. Please visit the ESR website for information on wastewater trends.²

Hospitalisationsⁱ

In the week ending 16 July 2023, the 7-day rolling average of hospital admissions was 0.49 per 100,000 population, a decrease compared to the previous week (0.60 per 100,000 09 July 2023).

Mortalityⁱⁱ

As of 16 July 2023, there were 573 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 2,563 deaths during 2022 and 50 deaths prior to 2022. The mortality rate was 0.03 per 100,000 population as of 16 July, a slight decrease compared to previous week (11 and 13 deaths respectively).

Variants of Concern

In the period 27 May to 30 June 2023, The XBB variants were still the most common (58% of sequenced cases in the past fortnight). The XBB.1.5 variant has been decreasing and now accounts for 5% of cases. The XBB.1.16 variant was stable, representing ~20% of cases. Other XBB variants accounted for 32% of cases, while FK.1.1 and CH.1.1 continue to circulate at 19% and 9%, respectively.

Māori

Cases

The 7-day rolling average of reported case rates was 9.9 per 100,000 population for the week ending 23 July 2023. The rate decreased compared to the previous week, which was 11.4 per 100,000.

Hospitalisationsⁱ

The 7-day rolling average rate for the week ending 16 July 2023 was 0.38 per 100,000 population, a decrease compared to the previous week (0.76 per 100,000).

Mortalityⁱⁱ

As of 16 July 2023, there were 43 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 231 deaths during 2022 and 15 deaths prior to 2022.

¹ The proportion of infections reported as cases is unknown and may vary by factors such as age and ethnicity.

² <https://www.esr.cri.nz/our-expertise/covid-19-response/covid19-insights/wastewater-surveillance-dashboard/>



Pacific peoples

Cases

The 7-day rolling average of reported case rates was 7.3 per 100,000 population for the week ending 23 July 2023. This is similar to the previous week, which was 7.1 per 100,000.

Hospitalisationsⁱ

The 7-day rolling average rate for the week ending 16 July 2023 was 0.64 per 100,000 population, a decrease compared to the previous week (0.72 per 100,000).

Mortalityⁱⁱ

As of 09 July 2023, there were 16 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 145 deaths during 2022 and 4 deaths prior to 2022.

ⁱ Hospital admissions data provides information on hospitalisations “for” COVID-19. Data pertaining to recent trends (up to 90 days) is provisional. Admissions may be re-coded as hospitalised “with” COVID-19 and removed from the dataset.

ⁱⁱ The mortality figures are for deaths attributed to COVID-19. Recent trends should be interpreted with caution to account for death coding delays of months or years after death.