



# Executive summary

**1 March 2023**

Three of four metrics used to monitor COVID-19 trends continued to remain relatively stable in the week ending 26 February 2023. Reported case rates for this week increased only slightly compared to the previous week (ending 19 February 2023). Hospital admissions decreased only slightly, and mortality remained stable when compared to the previous week (ending 12 February 2023). The viral RNA in wastewater for the week ending 19 February decreased.

In the fortnight to 10 February 2023, CH.1.1 was the dominant variant, accounting for 38% of sequenced community cases. CH.1.1 is a descendant of the BA.2.75 variant. Proportions of BA.2.75 are similar to the previous reporting period (fortnight to 28 January 2023) at 11%. Proportions of XBB increased to 12%.



# Key insights

## National Trends

<b>Cases</b>	The 7-day rolling average of reported case rates was 24.4 per 100,000 population for the week ending 26 February 2023. This was similar to the previous week (22.2 per 100,000). The proportion of infections reported as cases is unknown and may vary by factors such as age and ethnicity.
<b>Wastewater</b>	The viral RNA in wastewater for the week ending 19 February decreased. Please visit the ESR website for further information on wastewater trends. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Hospitalisations</b>	In the week ending 19 February 2023, the 7-day rolling average of hospital admissions was 0.5 per 100,000 population, similar to the previous week (0.6 per 100,000).
<b>Mortality</b>	As of 19 February 2023, there were 135 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 2,336 deaths during 2022 and 49 deaths prior to 2022. The mortality rate, as of the week ending 19 February remained stable compared to the previous week 12 February 2023.
<b>Variants of Concern</b>	Please refer to the latest Genomics Insights Report. <sup>2</sup>

## Māori

<b>Cases</b>	The 7-day rolling average of reported case rates was 22.1 per 100,000 population for the week ending 26 February 2023. The rate decreased from the previous week, which was 22.4 per 100,000.
<b>Hospitalisations</b>	The 7-day rolling average for the week ending 19 February 2023 was 0.3 per 100,000 population, decreasing from the previous week (0.7 per 100,000).
<b>Mortality</b>	As of 19 February 2023, there were 14 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 193 deaths during 2022 and 15 deaths prior to 2022.

## Pacific peoples

<b>Cases</b>	The 7-day rolling average of reported case rates was 15.6 per 100,000 population as of 26 February 2023, similar to the previous week (14.0 per 100,000).
<b>Hospitalisations</b>	The 7-day rolling average for the week ending 19 February 2023 was 0.4 per 100,000 population, a slight increase from the previous week (0.6 per 100,000).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.esr.cri.nz/our-expertise/covid-19-response/covid19-insights/wastewater-surveillance-dashboard/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.esr.cri.nz/our-expertise/covid-19-response/covid19-insights/genomics-insights/>



**Mortality**

As of 19 February 2023, there were 2 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 129 deaths during 2022 and 4 deaths prior to 2022.