



Executive summary

31 May 2023

Reported case rates for the week ending 28 May 2023 were relatively stable compared to the previous week. In the week ending 21 May, hospital admissions, mortality and viral RNA in wastewater remained stable, compared to the previous week.



Key insights

National Trends

Cases

The 7-day rolling average of reported¹ case rates was 37.9 per 100,000 population for the week ending 28 May 2023. This is relatively stable compared to the previous week average (36.1 per 100,000 to 21 May 2023).

Wastewater

The viral RNA in wastewater for the week ending 21 May 2023 remained stable compared to the previous week. Please visit the ESR website for information on wastewater trends.²

Hospitalisationsⁱ

In the week ending 21 May 2023, the 7-day rolling average of hospital admissions was 0.88 per 100,000 population, this is stable compared to 0.87 per 100,000 the previous week (ending 14 May 2023).

Mortalityⁱⁱ

As of 21 May 2023, there were 408 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 2,475 deaths during 2022 and 50 deaths prior to 2022. The mortality rate remained stable at 0.08 per 100,000 population to 21 May, compared to 0.09 per 100,000 in the previous week (31 compared to 33 deaths).

Variants of Concern

In the period 01 April to 28 April 2023, XBB was the most common variant; with the subvariant XBB.1.5 being the most dominant, accounting for 30% of sequenced cases. FK.1.1, a newly designated variant of CH.1.1 has been rising in proportions, accounting for 22%. FK1.1, XBB.1.16 and XBB.1.5 are the fastest growing variants. Please refer to Genomics Insights Report #37, released 05 May 2023.³

Māori

Cases

The 7-day rolling average of reported case rates was 36.2 per 100,000 population for the week ending 28 May 2023. The rate increased compared to the previous week, which was 33.0 per 100,000.

Hospitalisationsⁱ

The 7-day rolling average for the week ending 21 May 2023 was 0.81 per 100,000 population, slightly decreasing compared to the previous week (0.87 per 100,000).

Mortalityⁱⁱ

As of 21 May 2023, there were 35 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 210 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/>

³ <https://www.esr.cri.nz/our-expertise/covid-19-response/covid19-insights/genomics-insights/>



Pacific peoples

Cases

The 7-day rolling average of reported case rates was 24.3 per 100,000 population for the week ending 28 May 2023. The rate increased compared to the previous week, which was 22.2 per 100,000.

Hospitalisationsⁱ

The 7-day rolling average for the week ending 14 May 2023 was 0.88 per 100,000 population, increasing from the previous week (0.69 per 100,000).

Mortalityⁱⁱ

As of 21 May 2023, there were 7 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in 2023. There were 137 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.