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Managing the second wave of Omicron

Purpose

The purpose of this Advisory is to inform operators that yesterday the Government announced new public health measures to manage the spread of Covid-19. In addition to flu season, a second Omicron wave adds pressure on the health system. Below is a summary of the changes, and how they may affect your business. This is also a reminder that we are still operating during a pandemic.

Summary of changes

RATs and masks

- **Free masks and rapid antigen tests** will be available from testing sites and collection points
- There is no eligibility criteria, you do not need to be unwell to collect either RATs or masks
- The Government encourages everyone to collect supplies from a testing site or other locations
- You can arrange to collect through the My Covid App or the [Covid-19 website](#)

Antiviral medication

To reduce the severity of a COVID-19 infection, antiviral medication will be available to a broader group of 'at risk' individuals

- From Monday next week (18 July) anyone over 75 years of age who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be eligible to access antivirals through their GP
- At-risk patients for acute respiratory illnesses can be pre-approved by their GP and have their prescription ready should they become unwell and need the medicine immediately

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Support and information for businesses

For more information on how to manage the impact of COVID-19 cases at your business, see MBIE's page for guidance, including:

- Reducing the risk of Covid-19 infections at your business
- Creating a plan for Covid-19 cases affecting your business
- Following public health advice if you, your workers or someone else who visits your premise has Covid-19
- How to look after yourself and your mental health

Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge BusinessNZ for its role in making the above information available.

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