



Clinician alert #79 – all clinicians

Effective from 27 January 2022

New information

- Clinicians are reminded to refer any patient with symptoms of COVID-19 for PCR testing, regardless of epidemiological risk factors.
- There has been an unexpected wastewater detection in the City Beach area.
- Mask use is being extended to the Great Southern and Wheatbelt regions.

Community transmission of COVID-19 in WA

- As of 8pm 26 January 2022, there are 117 cases associated with the current Omicron variant community outbreak in WA.
- These include 12 clusters in Perth's southern suburbs, the Southwest region and now the Wheatbelt region.
- The majority of these clusters do not have clear epidemiological links to other clusters, indicating unknown chains of transmission, and presence of undiagnosed cases who are infectious in the community.
- Mask use is required in the Perth, Peel and Southwest regions, and the Great Southern and Wheatbelt regions from 6pm on 27 January 2022.

Unexpected wastewater detection of SARS-CoV-2

- There is an unexpected wastewater detection of SARS-CoV-2 in the City Beach area.
- This may indicate the presence of a person with COVID-19 either living in that area or having passed through that area. It could also represent ongoing shedding of virus in a person who has recovered from COVID-19.
- Testing of anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 who either reside in the City Beach area or have passed through the City Beach area, is strongly recommended.

Current testing advice

- Clinicians should be recommending **all** patients with COVID-19 symptoms to be tested for COVID-19 via a PCR test, even if symptoms are mild, and regardless of whether the person has visited a listed exposure site.
- Clinicians should not rely only on the exposure sites listed on the [HealthyWA website](#) to guide testing.
- Increasing testing rates of people who are symptomatic at this time is crucial to the early detection of spread of COVID-19 in the community.
- Refer to the [Testing Criteria for SARS-CoV-2](#) document for the clinical testing criteria.

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