



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

9 March 2021

## **Thank you to the people of Northland and Auckland – 1 million COVID-19 tests and counting**

More than 1 million COVID-19 tests have been completed in the Northern Region (Northland and Auckland) since testing began in February 2020.

The testing infrastructure is managed by the Northern Region DHBs (Northland, Waitematā, Auckland and Counties Manukau). It is available in a wide range of settings, including general practices, urgent care clinics, border and managed isolation and quarantine (MIQ) facilities, community testing centres, and hospitals, and is processed by a network of laboratories.

Northern Region Health Coordination Centre Lead (and Counties Manukau Health CEO) Pepulea'i Margie Apa thanked everyone involved in this significant milestone.

“Ever since the pandemic first arrived at our shores, testing has played a pivotal role in protecting our border and managing COVID-19 in our communities,” she said.

“Reaching this milestone highlights the hard work that our people in the Northern Region, community and primary health care staff, including Māori and Pacific providers and Urgent Care Clinics, healthcare workers in MIQ facilities, laboratory workers and DHB staff have put in to identify and stop the spread of COVID-19 in the region. I am exceptionally proud of everyone involved.

“I also want recognise the part the public has played over the past year – the health system can only test people who come forward and the figures show our people have not hesitated to do so.”

Ms Apa thanked the primary care sector for its significant contribution to the testing volumes (more than half of all tests are done in primary care) and also recognised the efforts of laboratory teams across the city to process samples, at times working through the night to manage concentrated periods of high demand.

“This has been a true team effort and shows that our systems are now well-established and ready to respond whenever increased testing is required,” she said.

“Since the announcement of the most recent outbreak on Sunday 14 February, we have seen more than 110,000 tests completed, providing assurance there is not undetected COVID-19 in our communities and supporting the very welcome move back to Alert Level 2.”

- Ends -



## Notes for editors

The Northland and Auckland DHBs are operating a regional response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC).

Media contact: Rachel Lorimer 021 527 306