

## Nine cases of legionellosis so far in June – please notify on suspicion

- ARPHS has seen a concerning rise of legionellosis cases notified across Auckland.
- This could be the result of contaminated building water systems restarted after lockdown.
- Please consider any community acquired pneumonia as possible legionellosis, and notify ARPHS on suspicion.
- If you have had patients with symptoms suggestive of community-acquired pneumonia since the move to COVID-19 Level 3, please consider an investigation for legionellosis.

### 24 June 2020

Eight of these nine cases notified since the start of June have been caused by *Legionella pneumophila* which is commonly linked to domestic plumbing, spas, building cooling systems, water blasting and environmental sources (including storm water after heavy rain). During the COVID-19 Alert Levels 4 and 3, many building cooling systems may have been shut down or not well maintained. With the move to Levels 2 and 1, these systems have been restarted but high levels of *Legionella* bacteria could be present.

Cases have occurred from Tuakau to Stanmore Bay. No causes or link has been found between cases yet.

ARPHS recommends testing people presenting acutely with community-acquired pneumonia, and notifying on suspicion. Appropriate tests are sputum PCR and Urinary Antigen Testing (UAT).

ARPHS would like to know of any possible cases which may have been managed during virtual consultations over the last month. Appropriate investigation for recent suspect cases should be discussed with a Medical Officer of Health or a laboratory Clinical Microbiologist. Paired legionella serology, with samples taken at least 4 weeks apart may be the most appropriate test.

Dr David Sinclair

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