Kia ora

To assist in a response to the concerns raised by ODI about the Omicron paper, please see below a suggested new section to the paper. Our key concern was that the equity and vulnerable populations issues were rightly raised within the paper but with not effective response proposed. I have included older people as an at risk population, but Diane Turner (copied in) may be best placed to comment on this.
Proposed changes to paper copied below. For sake of coherence, some adjustments may be required in other parts of the paper if these additional words are agreed for inclusion in the paper.
Nga mihi
Brian

Ensuring equity issues and risks and impact are known and designed into our response for other priority groups

69 When Omicron does spread across New Zealand, most people will likely only experience reasonably mild levels of illness (i.e. not requiring hospitalisation). However, as with Delta, there remains significantly higher risk for some communities and population groups. This includes those who are not yet vaccinated, or not sufficiently, older people, people with co-morbidities, lower socio-economic groups (and with reduced incomes), and those who live far from healthcare. These risk factors disproportionately affect Māori and Pacific communities, disabled people and older people.

70 This will require effective monitoring of the impact of Omicron and our response for these population groups.

71 To give practical effect to this it is proposed the Cabinet commission an immediate review of the Omicron responses proposed in this paper, including focussed engagement with representatives of the population groups to ensure that the Omicron response framework is effective for these population groups and/or design in reasonable adaptations to the framework and service reponses.