

Update on RAT requestor and distribution of RATs

[RAT Requestor](#) was established in March 2022 to enable New Zealanders to pre-order publicly funded (free) RATs for themselves and their household members.

At that time RATs were in limited supply and New Zealand was experiencing the beginning of the Omicron outbreak (with increased community transmission). The intended purpose of the RAT Requestor was to ensure only eligible people (those who were symptomatic and household contacts of COVID-19 cases) were able to order and receive publicly funded RATs.

Through RAT Requestor, RATs could either be ordered online or by calling the RAT Requestor line and an order number was issued. This order number then needed to be presented at the collection site, testing centre or participating general practice or pharmacy for an individual to be able to collect the pre-ordered, publicly funded RATs.

The July 2022 Winter Wellness package removed any specific eligibility criteria for RATs, which meant that anyone could access publicly funded RATs for their own personal use, and for the use of household members, to self-test for COVID-19 without the need to pre-order.

We have good stock levels of publicly funded/free RATs and all New Zealanders can source free publicly funded/free RATs from a wide distribution network, detailed on the [Healthpoint](#) website and on Te Whatu Ora's [local health websites – Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand](#)

While it is still currently possible to pre-order publicly funded RATs via requestrats.govt.nz, it is not a requirement to do so.

For the public, the primary source of information on where to collect free RATs is [Healthpoint](#).

Healthpoint outlines all of the location sites throughout the country that provide RATs. Some locations still state that pre-ordering of RATs is required. We are currently working with Healthpoint to amend the inaccurate messaging that maintains pre-ordering is required and ask that District Testing Leads update related messaging on their websites.

To avoid any further confusion in relation to the collection of RATs by the general public, Te Whatu Ora will be decommissioning RAT requestor as of 30th June 2023.

As of 1 July 2023, the general public will no longer have the ability to order RATs online and order numbers will no longer be generated.

The REACH RAT Requestor line (the Assisted Channel) 0800 222478 will continue to operate and be focussed on providing additional support to priority and vulnerable groups, and others needing additional assistance, with information and assistance to source RATs, including delivery if necessary.

Therefore, we are seeking your co-operation to ensure that RATs are supplied free to anyone that wishes to collect them from your pharmacy, without a pre-order number.

Please note that there has been no change to the way that you order RATs via the HCL portal or how you invoice the number of RATs that you have distributed.