

New Zealand Reaches 100-Day Milestone Without Coronavirus Transmission

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Wellington: New Zealand marked 100 days on Sunday with no recorded cases of the coronavirus in the community but health officials warned there was no room for complacency.

There are still 23 active cases but all were detected at the border when entering the country and are being held in managed isolation facilities.

"Achieving 100 days without community transmission is a significant milestone, however, as we all know, we can't afford to be complacent," director-general of health Ashley Bloomfield said.

"We have seen overseas how quickly the virus can re-emerge and spread in places where it was previously under control, and we need to be prepared to quickly stamp out any future cases in New Zealand."

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The World Health Organization has hailed the country as an example to others for having "successfully eliminated community transmission".

Since the first patient was diagnosed in February, there have been 1,219 confirmed cases of the virus in New Zealand with the last case of community transmission recorded on May 1.

As a result, New Zealanders are enjoying a near-normal, pre-coronavirus lifestyle with no social distancing and spectators allowed at sports and cultural events, but with the border strictly controlled and all arrivals required to spend 14 days in quarantine.

The government has maintained the prospect of a second wave remains a possibility and is pushing for all households to keep emergency supply kits including masks.

- AFP