

General practitioners:

VIRAL WATCH NEEDS YOUR HELP

What is Viral Watch?

Viral Watch is a GP based surveillance programme for influenza. Since 1984, the Viral Watch data have been important to define the start and intensity of the influenza season, determine the type and distribution of circulating influenza viruses, estimate influenza vaccine effectiveness and provide viral isolates that assist with the annual vaccine formulation (as part of function as the World Health Organization's National Influenza Centre). Today we also test for SARS-CoV-2 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

What we need?

Enthusiastic general practitioners

What is involved?

- Enrol patients with symptoms of fever and cough (only verbal consent required)
- Enrolment throughout the year
- Take a nasal swab (kits provided free of charge)
- Complete a short form (online or on paper)
- Swabs are transported to NICD via the usual pathology laboratory used by the practitioner (Ampath or Lancet) or National Health Laboratory Service.

Benefits?

- Results (influenza, RSV and SARS-CoV-2) will be communicated to you within 24 hours of receiving the sample at NICD free of charge
- Contribute to respiratory virus surveillance and receive updates on respiratory pathogens (influenza, RSV, SARS-CoV-2) surveillance
- No cost
- Invitation to annual respiratory virus symposium (CPD points)
- CPD points for programme participation (if you submit 10 or more swabs a year)

How to join?

Send email to **Nondumiso Khoza** at nondumisok@nicd.ac.za or **Sibongile Walaza** at sibongilew@nicd.ac.za or sign up here: <https://crdm.nicd.ac.za/vwreg/>