

Substantive new content since last letter from Chief Health Officer dated 7 August:

- Changes to LGAs – addition of Hornsby Shire and Hills District
- Recommendation to limit staff working across multiple settings
- Addition of link for venues where staff must isolate

Dear Home Care Service Providers

Thank you for being responsive to implementing measures to prevent introduction of COVID-19 into your services.

The outbreak of COVID-19 continues in Victoria and the outbreak in NSW, first detected in South Western Sydney, has now spread to some other areas. While the initial focus of cases in Victoria was in metropolitan Melbourne, there are a number of cases in some areas of regional Victoria.

It is crucial that all home care service (disability and aged care) providers maintain vigilance to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 into your services.

Minimising staff movement across multiple settings

As part of preparedness planning, providers should put in place arrangements to limit staff working across multiple settings (such as in home and residential care)

Where ceasing staff movement across settings is not practicable, staff movement should be minimised and additional measures should be put in place, such as maintaining records of staff and work locations and increasing use of Personal Protective Equipment.

Given the current risk of COVID-19 now in the community NSW Health recommends the implementation of the following measures.

- Any staff with fever $\geq 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ or respiratory symptoms¹, even mild, **should be excluded** from work. They should be advised to isolate at home and seek COVID-19 testing.

¹ Symptoms include: fever, cough, sore/ scratchy throat, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell

- Ongoing: any staff who have visited any of the locations on the same time as a COVID-19 case (see updated list of venues and dates at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates>) should be excluded for a period of 14 days since their visit to the listed location. **It is important to regularly check the website, as this list may expand.**
- Any staff who reside in the following local government areas: **Hornsby Shire, Hills District**, Newcastle, Merrylands (suburb), Guildford (suburb), Canterbury-Bankstown (Bankstown part), Waverley, Woollahra, eastern part of City of Sydney² (refer to footnote for changes), Parramatta, Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown and Camden, **must wear a surgical mask while providing services.**
- Any staff who have been in Victoria in the previous 14 days **should be excluded** from providing home care services (noting an exception for staff in border communities with a valid border permit)
- Any staff who live in NSW/VIC border communities **must wear a surgical mask while providing services.**
- Any staff providing care to clients who live in, or have visited the above local government areas, or a NSW/VIC border community, **must wear a surgical mask while providing services.**
- Please note that some residents may react with discomfort to seeing staff wearing surgical masks. Consider supporting tools to manage this as needed (eg: show a photo with the staff member's face uncovered).
- Staff must actively ask clients about symptoms on arrival. If staff become aware of a client with symptoms, that client should be isolated from others, and arrangements made for COVID-19 testing.

Please regularly check the [NSW Government website](#) for information and updates. The Department of Health has also issued a [Guide for Home Care Providers](#) to assist staff in staying COVID-Safe.

If you would like more information, please contact your local NSW Health public health unit on 1300 066 055.

² Suburbs: Sydney, Surry Hills, Darlinghurst, Woolloomooloo, Potts Point, Rushcutters Bay, Elizabeth Bay, Centennial Park (**removed Eveleigh, Alexandria, Beaconsfield, Rosebery and Eastlakes**)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Chant'.

Dr Kerry Chant PSM
Chief Health Officer, NSW Health
9 August 2020

NSW Clinical Excellence Commission resources

Personal Protective Equipment training

<http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/keep-patients-safe/COVID-19/personal-protective-equipment>

Escalation framework

http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/595754/COVID-19-Infection-Prevention-and-Control-Response-and-Escalation-Framework.pdf

Commonwealth Department of Health Resources

Infection Prevention & Control

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidelines-for-infection-prevention-and-control-in-residential-care-facilities>

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-the-health-and-aged-care-sector/personal-protective-equipment-ppe-for-the-health-workforce-during-covid-19>

Personal Protective Equipment resources – multiple languages

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/05/coronavirus-covid-19-when-to-use-personal-protective-equipment-in-aged-care.pdf>

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/translated/coronavirus-covid-19-when-to-use-personal-protective-equipment-in-aged-care-other-languages>

Training Modules - Specially developed for aged care

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/new-covid-19-e-learning-modules-now-available>

Personal Protective Equipment Videos

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/videos/coronavirus-covid-19-wearing-personal-protective-equipment-in-aged-care-video>

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission resources

Infection Protection and Control

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/resources/are-you-alert-and-ready>

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/cdna-guidance-for-symptom-monitoring-in-health-and-aged-care-workers-during-the-covid-19-outbreak>