

Hon Steven Marshall MP
Premier

Hon Stephen Wade MLC
Minister for Health and Wellbeing

Tuesday 17 March 2020

South Australia's first regional COVID-19 clinic opens

A series of Coronavirus (COVID-19) clinics will open in regional South Australia over the coming days as the Marshall Liberal Government rolls out its plan to further protect and prepare the community against the spread of the virus.

The state's first regional clinic opens today at Mount Barker Hospital ensuring that those in the area have access to timely testing and treatment for Coronavirus.

Premier Steven Marshall said the health and safety of all South Australians is the Government's number one priority.

"The establishment of regional clinics forms part of our plan which is focused on ensuring all parts of South Australia, both metropolitan and regional, are prepared for the impact of the Coronavirus," the Premier said.

"We are encouraging people who have symptoms and have recently travelled, or been in close contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus, to present for testing.

"In addition to the Mount Barker clinic, drive-through COVID-19 testing clinics in both Whyalla and Port Augusta are expected to be operational in the coming days. This will ease the pressure on emergency departments and local GPs.

"We also want to take this opportunity to remind regional communities that these services are specifically designed for people who have recently returned from overseas travel or been in close contact with a confirmed Coronavirus case.

"This is another part of our strong response to Coronavirus. We want people to be alert, not alarmed during this time."

Mount Barker Hospital's Acting Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Merridy Chester, said the Mt Barker clinic will help to maintain the flow through the emergency department, while assisting local GPs.

"We know there are a growing number of people requiring testing for Coronavirus in Mount Barker and the establishment of this clinic will help to ease the pressure on our emergency department and deliver best practice infection control measures," Ms Chester said.

"The clinic will mean we can assess, test and refer suspected, probable or confirmed cases of Coronavirus on for isolation, with the ability to directly liaise with SA Health's Communicable Disease Control Branch in the event the contact tracing process is required.



“We have two designated nurses who are trained in using personal protective equipment specific to infectious diseases, that will staff the clinic daily.

“This is an extremely positive step for the region, ensuring the segregation of potentially infectious Coronavirus cases while providing the most appropriate clinical care.”

The Mount Barker Hospital COVID-19 clinic is the first regional clinic to open in the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network, with planning under way for additional clinics in the region.

Planning is also underway for COVID-19 clinics in other regional Local Health Networks.

Access to the Mount Barker Hospital COVID-19 clinic is through Gate 3. This is an ambulance only entrance, so people are encouraged to park in surrounding car parks and enter on foot following the signs to the clinic.

The clinic is open 9am to 5pm, seven days a week.