

## Suggested Infection & Control Guidelines for Clients 14 March 2020

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a **virus** that has affected many people around the world. A virus is an illness or disease that can spread easily from one person to another person. Coronavirus is spreading quickly. Coronavirus has been called a **pandemic**. A virus is called a pandemic when it spreads quickly to lots of countries around the world.

The Australian Government has decided to start its **Coronavirus Emergency Response Plan (CERP)**. The CERP is a document that explains what we must do if the Coronavirus starts spreading from person to person in Australia. We have created this document in response to this plan.

The NDIS have implemented strategies in response to this plan, including reducing face to face meetings, see link for more information. <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/4577-coronavirus-update>

### What Can you do?

There is evidence that the virus spreads from person-to-person. The virus is most likely spread through:

- close contact with an infectious person
- contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze
- touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables) that have cough or sneeze droplets from an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face.
- Contact with someone who has returned from overseas.

Social distancing is an effective measure, but it is recognised that it cannot be practised in all situations and the aim is to reduce potential for transmission. It is important that everyone does their part to limit spread of COVID-19. This will help protect vulnerable people in our community and reduce the burden on our hospitals. Avoid all unnecessary travel & attendance at large events.

While practising social distancing, people can travel to work (including public transport). For non-essential activities outside the workplace or attendance at schools, universities and childcare - social distancing includes:

- avoiding crowds and mass gatherings where it is difficult to keep the appropriate distance away from others
- avoiding small gatherings in enclosed spaces, for example family celebrations
- attempting to keep a distance of 1.5 metres between themselves and other people where possible, for example when they are out and about in public place.
- avoiding shaking hands, hugging, or kissing other people

- avoiding visiting vulnerable people, such as those in aged care facilities or hospitals, infants, or people with compromised immune systems due to illness or medical treatment

Some people with a Disability will be at a much higher risk than others so it's important to be educated, aware and prepare. This includes having these conversations with your Providers and Support Workers. We want to avoid panic and the best way to do that is education and preparedness.

- Maintain good hand hygiene by regularly cleaning hands thoroughly with soap and water for a count of 20, or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Use a tissue and cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze to try to catch it and throw the tissue away.
- Do not touch your face or eyes with your hands
- Avoiding close contact with others, such as touching, shaking hands etc.
- If you know anyone (family, friends, Workers) returning from Overseas you could ask them to stay away from you for 2 weeks.
- You can ask your Providers for their infection control measures to ensure its adequate for you/your loved one and what may happen if your Support Worker is unwell and cannot work.
- Request every Support Worker & Provider who comes to your home to wash their hands, properly, on entering or leaving your home, before and after going to the toilet, and before and after preparing or eating food.
- Provide your Support workers with Personal Protective Equipment to protect you and themselves against infection spread.

If you/your loved one attends a Day program you need to know what your Providers Infection Control Protocol is and what alternative Supports will be available.

If anyone who has been identified as close contacts of a person diagnosed with COVID-19 during their infectious period must also self-isolate at home, and should not attend work, school or childcare settings until 14 days after their last contact with the infected person.

Create a safety station at the entrance to your home. You can purchase hand sanitiser, tissues, masks, gloves & bin for disposal and Glen 20 for extra precautions and create a sign to put up at your front door warning people that they need to be extra careful when entering your home and what you would like them to do on entering.

## How Can I be Prepared if I choose to Self-Isolate?

Practical suggestions in case you or family feel unwell and choose to self- isolate;

- If you are sharing your home with others, you should stay in a different room from other people or be separated as much as possible. Wear a surgical mask when you are in the same room as another person, and when seeking medical care. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Make sure that you do not share a room with people who are at risk of severe disease, such as elderly people and those who have heart, lung or kidney conditions, are Immunocompromised and have diabetes.
- Visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home should not visit while you are isolating.
- Ensure you have enough everyday supplies for 2 weeks including pantry items to make meals, pet food, long life milk, frozen veges, fruit and meat etc.
- Ensure you have enough medications, prescriptions, pain relief, consumables, continence products.
- Glen 20/Eucalyptus Oil spray, paper towels or gloves (for opening door handles, taps and knobs), tissues, soap, hand sanitiser, gloves & personal care items etc to last 2 weeks.
- You can ask your support Workers to assist you to be prepared and stock stock of your pantry, fridge and freezer and help you to know what to do if you run out of essential items; E.G; setting up online shopping and teach you how to use it (or giving your Support Worker the login details to do it for you) and the groceries can be delivered to your door.
- If you need to leave home to seek medical attention, wear a surgical mask (if you have one) to protect others.
- Your Support Workers can cook you some meals from meals from their home and deliver to your door.
- If any of your Support Workers feel unwell you can ask them to stay away if you are concerned.
- You can offer payment to your Casual Workers if you request they stay away from you so they are not financially disadvantaged by your decision to self- isolate.
- You can ask your Providers to work with you via phone, email or Zoom/Skype.
- Inform the people who you work with of your decision to Self-Isolate and provide them with the dates you are doing this.

Some great Additional resources are listed below;

- Alternatives to shaking hands- Elbow Bumps, Foot taps, salutes and winks-  
<https://www.watoday.com.au/national/elbow-bumps-foot-taps-the-wink-new-greetings-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-20200310-p548i7.html>
- DSC Supporting People to stay Infection free e-learning module.  
<https://training.disabilityservicesconsulting.com.au/products/infectionfree>
- Dr Norman Swan with a Coronavirus reality check  
<https://www.abc.net.au/7.30/dr-norman-swan-with-a-coronavirus-reality-check/12040538>
- Daily updates from the Federal Government can be found here:  
<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- The Australian Government Website has some great Factsheets and information here;  
<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

If you need to talk to someone, Contact one of the services below for support or talk to your general practitioner.

- Lifeline Australia: 13 11 14  
A crisis support service that provides short term support at any time for people who are having difficulty coping or staying safe.
- Kids Helpline: 1800 551800  
A free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25 years.
- NSW Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511  
Mental health crisis telephone service in NSW.

## Feeling unwell?

If you develop a fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of overseas travel or have had contact with someone returning from overseas, seek medical attention.

Symptoms can range from mild illness to [pneumonia](#). Some people will recover easily, and others may get very sick very quickly. People with coronavirus may experience:

- fever
- flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue
- shortness of breath
- [Call your GP](#)
- [Visit the Emergency Department](#)

- [Call Healthdirect 1800 022 222](#)

Call this number to speak to a registered nurse about your health concerns. The hotline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- Call Coronavirus Health Information Line [1800 022 222](#)

Call this line if you are seeking information on novel coronavirus. The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>