

5 November 2020

Our ref: H20/122749-3

## Advice to Home Care Service Provider

### Key points

- Exclude staff who:
  - Have a fever or symptoms of COVID-19
  - Have in the last 14 days been identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 case
  - Have in the last 14 days been in any of the locations listed on the [self-isolate and get tested immediately](#) page, at the times and dates listed,
  - Have in the last 14 days been in any of the locations listed on the [monitor for symptoms](#) page, at the times and dates listed except where noted otherwise on the webpage,
  - Have in the last 14 days been in Victoria (apart from the Victorian [border region](#)).
- Plan for all staff to wear surgical masks should it be recommended in the future because of an increased risk of local transmission.
- Monitor the [NSW COVID-19 Website](#) for regular updates of venues where confirmed COVID-19 cases have recently attended.

Dear Home Care Service Provider

All home care service providers must maintain vigilance to prevent the introduction of COVID-19. This is because COVID-19 is still circulating in some areas of Sydney. There remains a risk that, in the future, an outbreak could also occur in other parts of NSW. If an outbreak was to occur in your area, your service will need to be able to rapidly implement additional protections, including wearing of masks by all staff and visitors until the risk recedes.

### COVID-19 Safety Measures for Home Care Service Providers

- **Minimise staff working across multiple settings** (such as in home and residential care). Where ceasing staff movement across settings is not practical, additional measures should be put in place, such as maintaining records of staff and work locations and increasing use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Advice on masks:
  - All staff who in the last 14 days have:
    - worked, lived in, or visited [areas with increased testing, or](#)
    - visited a large shopping centre listed on the [monitor for symptoms web page](#) marked as “not excluded from visiting a residential aged care facility or residential disability care facility”should wear surgical masks when in the facility, including when caring for residents and where physical distancing (1.5m) from other people cannot be maintained.
  - All disability and home care service providers must maintain vigilance to prevent the introduction of COVID-19. This is because COVID-19 is still circulating in some areas of Sydney. There remains a risk that, in the future, an outbreak could also occur in other parts of NSW. If an outbreak was to occur in your area, your service will need to be able to rapidly implement additional protections, including wearing of masks by all staff and visitors until the risk recedes
- Ensure staff 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.

As of 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the [areas of increased testing](#) are: [Camden LGA](#) and [Liverpool LGA](#).

## Guidance on Staff Restrictions

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### Exclude all staff from home visits who:

- Have a fever (37.5°C or higher) or any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection, even if mild. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, headache, fatigue, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath, and loss of taste or loss of smell. Other reported symptoms of COVID-19 include muscle pain, joint pain, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting and loss of appetite.
- During the last 14 days;
  - have been identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 case.
  - have been in any of the locations on the [self-isolate and get tested immediately](#) list, at the times and dates listed.
  - have been in any of the locations on the [monitor for symptoms](#) list, at the times and dates listed except where noted otherwise on the webpage, **or**
  - have been in Victoria (apart from the Victorian [border region](#))

## Additional advice for all Home Care Service Providers

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- The Commonwealth Department of Health has issued a Guide for Home Care Service Providers to assist staff in reducing the risk of COVID-19:  
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guide-for-home-care-providers>.
- More detailed advice for services who provide care in the home is at:  
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/community-outpatient.aspx>
- Please seek the advice of your local NSW Health Public Health Unit if you are in doubt about how to appropriately mitigate risk when providing home care services on 1300 066 055.
- For more information about NDIS-related issues, including any funding issues relating to compliance with these measures for NDIS participants, contact:
  - the NDIA on 1800 800 110 or <https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus>
  - NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/>
  - email [MOH-NDIS@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MOH-NDIS@health.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Kerry Chant PSM**  
Chief Health Officer, NSW Health

## **In-Text Hyperlinks and Additional Resources**

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Up to date information about COVID-19 can be found at:

### **Latest Case Locations:**

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#latest-covid-19-case-locations-in-nsw>

- Areas with increased testing  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#areas-with-increased-testing>
- Self-isolate and get tested immediately:  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#self-isolate-and-get-tested-immediately-if-youve-been-to-these-locations>
- Monitor for symptoms  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#monitor-for-symptoms-if-youve-been-to-these-locations>
- Victorian Border Region:  
<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/border-zone-address-check>

### **Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19**

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/frequently-asked-questions.aspx#1-4>

### **Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) Infection Control Guidelines**

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/cdna-national-guidelines-for-the-prevention-control-and-public-health-management-of-covid-19-outbreaks-in-residential-care-facilities-in-australia>

### **Clinical Excellence Commission Infection Control Guidelines**

[https://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/601241/COVID-19-IPC-Guidance-for-Visiting-Patients-in-HCFs.pdf](https://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/601241/COVID-19-IPC-Guidance-for-Visiting-Patients-in-HCFs.pdf)

### **Hand Hygiene**

<https://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/keep-patients-safe/infection-prevention-and-control/healthcare-associated-infections/hand-hygiene>