

18 March 2020

Important Information on Corona Virus (COVID-19)

We would like to acknowledge the significant impact coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on communities and individuals across the world. Our thoughts go out to those who have been directly impacted by this crisis. The safety and wellbeing of our participants, families, volunteers and staff is always our highest priority and we want to outline the measures we are taking at all Connecting2Australia (C2A) locations to protect our participants, families, staff, volunteers and suppliers.

We are staying up to date with developments on the virus by following the Commonwealth and Victorian Government's Chief Medical Officer's and Health Minister's advice. We also receive regular updates from the National Disability Insurance Agency and our peak body, National Disability Services. Guided by this, we are implementing a range of measures to lessen the risks and spread of the virus.

It is probable some of our operations and services in the future may be impacted and may require some immediate changes in the short term. If this occurs, we will be in immediate contact with those affected to advise of the changes.

The safety of the people we support, our participants, families, staff and volunteers are our priority. At Connecting2Australia, we already have a very strong safety focus and implement risk management control measures accordingly.

We have taken extra measures in response to COVID-19 which include:

- Reviewing our programs and services with a focus on health and safety measures for all participants, families, staff, volunteers, suppliers and contractors.
- Our Leadership Response Team are regularly monitoring, reviewing and implementing tighter infection control measures.
- Educating participants and staff across C2A around appropriate personal space and reinforcing good hygiene practices and regular hand washing
- Additional cleaning regimes including cleaning hard surfaces, door handles, light switches and key hand touch point areas.
- Suspending operations for our Op shop and Second-hand store to protect the health and wellbeing of our volunteers, participants and staff
- Working with our suppliers to ensure ongoing availability of essential items such as antiseptic for cleaning surfaces, hand sanitiser and personal protective equipment.
- Asking participants or staff who are sick or present with cold or flu like symptoms to remain at home.
- Avoiding all unnecessary face to face meetings, instead using electronic, phone or online alternatives.
- Limiting travel to only the most essential meetings.
- Reminding staff to maintain recommended practices such as regular hand washing, self-isolating themselves and seeking medical advice if they are concerned or they have been exposed to someone with the virus
- Arrangements are being made for all staff to have access to influenza vaccinations when they become available

We are also increasing monitoring of visitors, staff volunteers and participants who have recently travelled overseas or been exposed to people that may have the virus. Unfortunately, we cannot allow people at risk to enter our services or sites.

By Law, Participants, staff, contractors and volunteers who have travelled overseas recently will self-quarantine for 14 days upon return.

Staff providing supports to clients in the community cannot visit the homes of people at risk.

We need your help to keep everyone safe

If you're sick in any way, especially if you have flu-like symptoms, please don't visit our sites.

- Contact Nurse-On-Call on 1300 60 60 24 immediately
- Adhere to good hand hygiene by washing your hands for at least 20 seconds before entering our sites or eating; and after using the toilet.
- Use the hand sanitiser available at entry points to our sites.
- If you need to cough or sneeze, do it into your elbow and readily dispose of any tissues.
- Tell us if you have travelled overseas or have been in contact with anyone at risk of having COVID-19 before visiting a site.
- We recommend being vaccinated for the coming flu season (always seek appropriate medical advice).
- Speak to our team if you have concerns about the health of someone at Connecting2Australia.
- Go to the Department of Health website www.health.vic.gov.au for the latest information.

Keep up to date

Connecting2Australia will share information about COVID-19 as quickly as possible by sending emails, text messages, via the C2A website.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us on 1300 111 212

Other valuable sources of information include

Victorian Department of Health: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

Commonwealth Department of Health - Follow links to Corona Virus

<https://www.health.gov.au/>

These measures will remain in place until advised otherwise, however all services will continue business as usual with the appropriate safety processes in place.

We thank you for your ongoing support to keep Connecting2Australia as safe as possible and we look forward to continuing our association with you.

Yours sincerely

Keith Mortimer
Chief Executive Officer

Pandemic Response Planning - COVID-19: Self Isolation Guidance

When should I self-isolate?	What does self-isolation mean?	Living with others
<p>If you have been in any country overseas or been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days, you may have been exposed to or been infected with COVID-19. If you have been exposed, it may take up to two weeks for symptoms to present. To keep yourself and others safe, you must isolate yourself from other people for 14 days from the time you left the overseas country or were exposed to COVID-19. We know it is a stressful time, but taking these measures will help protect you, your family, and all of C2A staff from COVID-19 and other common infectious diseases</p>	<p>Self-isolation means staying away from situations where you could infect other people. This means any situation where you may come in close contact with others (face to face contact closer than 1 metre for more than 15 minutes or being in the same closed space for two hours), such as social gatherings, work, school, child care/pre-school centres, university, polytechnic and other education providers, faith-based gatherings, aged care and health care facilities, prisons, sports gatherings, restaurants and all public gatherings.</p>	<p>As much as possible, you should limit your contact with people other than anyone you travelled with. If you are living where others have not travelled, minimise close contact with them and for face-to-face contact remember the 1 metre / 15 minutes or closed space rule. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, pillows or other items with other people in your home. After using these items, you should wash them thoroughly.</p>
Transport	Coughs and sneezes	Wash your hands
<p>If you need to travel, (plane, train or bus), where possible, sit in a window seat in a row by yourself. While travelling make sure you use hand sanitiser regularly. Remember the coughing or sneezing advice. You should minimise your use of public transport, taxis and ride-sharing apps like Uber. Avoid crowded public transport, especially during rush hour.</p>	<p>Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in a lined rubbish bin, and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds making sure you dry them thoroughly. You can also use hand sanitiser.</p>	<p>Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use a hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.</p>
Getting food and medicine	Take care of your well being	Can you leave the house?
<p>Where possible, contact a friend, family member or delivery services to carry out errands like supermarket shopping on your behalf.</p>	<p>Living through a pandemic is a stressful time. Your emotional and mental health is important. It is normal to feel stressed or lonely when self-isolating, but there are some things you can do to feel better.</p>	<p>Try not to leave the house, but to avoid going completely stir-crazy, there are options for spending time outside.</p>
Visitors / Deliveries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to your usual supports, like family and friends, and talk about how you feel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can spend time in your garden, courtyard or balcony, as long as they're private areas If your outside areas are a shared space in a building or apartment block, it's best to wear a surgical mask while out there.
If you feel unwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stick to a routine such as having regular mealtimes, bedtimes and exercising. If you feel you are not coping, it is important to talk with a health professional. 	More Questions ...
<p>If you are unwell you should seek advice from your health professional before you come to work or travel.</p>		<p>Contact the Victorian Department of Health https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus or phone 1800 675 398</p>