

18 March 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



FEVER



COUGH



SHORTNESS OF BREATH



SORE THROAT

How WE will support YOU

Our Plan

As you would be well aware COVID-19 and Australia's response to this outbreak has and will affect many parts of our society for the foreseeable future. As a client of Mercy Services it is important you understand our plan and how this will affect you over the coming months.

In preparing this plan Mercy Services have relied upon guidance material from:

- Commonwealth Department of Health
- NSW Health
- Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission

The most significant protection for you and for our staff is:

- Hand hygiene (see page 4)
- Managing coughing and sneezing (see page 4)
- Social distancing, commonly described as 1m to 1.5m separation from one another where possible

All of the measures that follow are designed to continue to support you during a difficult COVID-19, cold and flu season.

Group Social Support

Due to the new social distancing guidelines we will need to suspend these activities until such time as we are advised otherwise by the respective departments of Health. As you will appreciate, transporting significant numbers of clients to external venues and back home again in a bus, while keeping 1-1.5m separation between all people is just not possible. These changes come into effect from Monday the 23rd of March 2020.

Day Centres

We will practise social distancing at all our sites, including our three day centres: Tighes Hill; West Wallsend; and Newcastle Elderly Citizens Centre (NECC) and if you are a client of these centres you would already have observed some changes. Some clients may not be able to observe social distancing and we will speak individually with these clients and their carers.

If all abide by the social distancing guidelines, the risk of transmission of any virus or bacteria will be greatly reduced. Our intention is to keep our day centres operating for as long as possible however if the risk is too great for our clients, or if our workers are needed to provide essential care services (medications, food and personal cares) in the community, we may have no other choice but to suspend Day Centre services until it is safe to reopen.

In Home Care

The most important message is that we will continue to provide you with services in your home, however there may be changes over the following months.

Here is what we will be doing to protect you and the staff who serve you over the following months. The points 1 through to 5 will commence from **23 March 2020**, until further notice.

- 1.** Prior to each visit we will call you to ask if you are showing any cold or flu like symptoms. If you have symptoms we may ask you to put on a mask, like the one in the picture below.



- 2.** Depending on the type of service that you are receiving we may need to don personal protective equipment (PPE) while we care for you, see the picture to the right of what someone dressed in PPE may look like. If we are not providing personal care we may ask you to remain at a safe distance while we complete our service.

- 3.** Staff will be called before each shift and asked if they are showing any cold and flu like symptoms. If they are they will be asked to stay away from work until they have recovered.

- 4.** If you are suspected of having COVID-19 and are in self isolation we **WILL** continue to provide you support. Staff would be required to wear full PPE while they are in your home.

- 5.** If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 and are not requiring hospitalisation we **WILL** continue to provide you with support. Staff would be required to wear full PPE while they are in your home.

As you would appreciate if we have a lot of staff off sick or a number of clients that are sick or we are caring for clients with COVID-19, your services may need to be completed by an alternative worker. If this does happen we will let you know the details of the changes in advance.



In Home Care

If there is a wide spread outbreak of COVID-19 in the local community we may be forced to alter the services we provide to you so that we can provide essential services to those most in need. We have identified the most critical services for our clients to be:

1. Medication support
2. Provision of food
3. Personal care - please note, if you are receiving clinical services from our registered nurses, these will continue during this period.

If you are receiving the above services, be assured these will remain our highest priority within Home & Community Care. If you are not receiving one of these services, please be aware that the below services may be interrupted for a period so that we can ensure the essential services can be delivered.

- Domestic Assistance
- Group Social Support
- Day Centres
- Home Maintenance
- Individual social support

The reason some or all of these services may be interrupted is so that we have the adequate staff to meet the three vital services mentioned earlier. Please understand this would be a worst case scenario but the team at Mercy Services believe that it is important for you to understand that we have a plan and this may affect you during this unprecedented COVID-19 outbreak.

We remain committed to working with you so if you have questions or feedback we would like to hear from you. Please contact us in one of the following ways:

- Your regular CCA
- Your Care Manager
- Leave a message on our website <https://mercyservices.org.au/contact-us>
- covid19@mercyservices.org.au



**We're
HERE to
support
YOU**

How to Protect Yourself and Others

Protect yourself and others from getting sick

Wash your hands



- after coughing or sneezing
- when caring for the sick
- before, during and after you prepare food
- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty
- after handling animals or animal waste



Protect others from getting sick

When coughing and sneezing **cover mouth and nose** with flexed elbow or tissue



Throw tissue into closed bin immediately after use

Clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water after coughing or sneezing and when caring for the sick



Protect others from getting sick



Avoid close contact when you are experiencing cough and fever

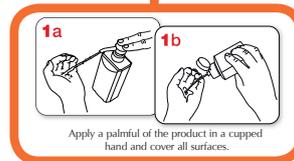
Avoid spitting in public



If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing **seek medical care early** and share previous travel history with your health care provider



How to handrub? WITH ALCOHOL-BASED FORMULATION



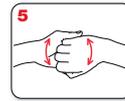
Rub hands palm to palm



right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa



palm to palm with fingers interlaced



backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa



rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa



rinse hands with water



dry thoroughly with a single use towel



use towel to turn off faucet



...once dry, your hands are safe.



...and your hands are safe.



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October 2008, version 1.