

15 October 2020 – Advice to Home Care Services ¹

Our ref: H20/111429-3

Key points

- Exclusion recommendations are in place for certain areas in Sydney and Victoria
- Any person who has been in Shepparton, VIC in the previous 14 days should be excluded (regardless of a valid COVID-19 border region resident permit).
- Further advice will be reconsidered next week based on the incidence of COVID-19. In the meantime, facilities should monitor the COVID-19 news and updates page for any new locations of concern: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#latest-covid-19-case-locations-in-nsw>

Dear Home Care Service Providers

All home care services must maintain vigilance to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 into the sites where services are provided.

Wherever possible residents should be supported to have continued access to essential health and disability supports.

COVID-19 safety measures for home care services

- **Minimise staff working across multiple settings (such as in home and residential care).** Where ceasing staff movement across settings is not practicable, additional measures should be put in place, such as maintaining records of staff and work locations and increasing use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Ensure a **surgical mask is worn by staff** when caring for clients or where they cannot physically distance from others who work in, reside in, or have visited in the last 14 days.
 - [Lakemba \(suburb\)](#), [Liverpool LGA](#) and [Camden LGA](#) or
 - a NSW/VIC border community.
- 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.

Access restrictions

Exclude all staff from resident contact and home visits who have:

- **fever** 37.5°C or higher, or respiratory **symptoms**², even if mild
- **been in Victoria** in the previous 14 days (exceptions exist for staff in NSW/VIC border communities with a valid COVID-19 border region resident permit). **Any person who has been in Shepparton in the previous 14 days should be excluded, regardless of a valid COVID-19 border region resident permit.**
- visited any of the venues listed on the NSW Government website at the same time as a COVID-19 case (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#latest-covid-19-case-locations-in-nsw>)

¹ Services that support people with disabilities and aged and frail in the community

² Symptoms include: fever, cough, sore/scratchy throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, loss of taste or smell

Additional advice:

- The Commonwealth Department of Health has issued a Guide for Home Care 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.

If you would like more information about this guidance please contact your local NSW Health Public Health Unit 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

Yours sincerely



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