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Coronavirus COVID-19 daily update


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This Chief Health Officer update is intended to provide clinicians and the Victorian public with information about the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Victoria as well as relevant public health response activities in Victoria. Chief Health Officer Alerts will continue to be issued when there are changes to the public health advice related to COVID-19.

03/04/2020

What's new?

Developments in the outbreak

- As of 3 April 2020, Victoria has 1,085 total confirmed cases, 37 people are in hospitals including seven people in intensive care. Seven people have died. 59% of cases are directly linked to overseas travel, and 62 were locally acquired (in Victoria) with no known link to overseas travel or another confirmed case. In total, 476 people have recovered.
- Of the total 1,085 cases, there have been 866 in metropolitan Melbourne and 205 in regional Victoria. A number of cases remain under investigation.
- This week, Australia's total exceeded 5,000 cases. That is expected to increase significantly in coming weeks unless people stay at home.
- Up-to-date [epidemiological data](#)  is available on our website.

Updated advice to clinicians

- Deaths that are due to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection are notifiable to DHHS 24 hours a day by phone on 1300 651 160. At this early stage of the Victorian epidemic, timely notification is a key action to help guide the public health response.

- DHHS is in regular contact with all confirmed cases and will determine when they are no longer infectious for release from isolation. Hospital discharge of confirmed COVID-19 cases can be determined on clinical grounds without prior approval by DHHS. Patients are not required to stay in hospital for the duration of their infectious period.
- The case definition has changed. See the [Health services and general practice - coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#) page for updated information, including new *Quick Reference Guide and Guidelines for health services and general practitioners*.
- Doctors, nurses, midwives and mental health professionals can deliver temporary Medicare Benefits Schedule and Department of Veterans' Affairs items via telehealth, provided those services are bulk billed.
- Doctors are encouraged to remind all patients that they should stay at home unless going to medical appointments or performing essential tasks.
- If testing health care workers, doctors are reminded to clearly mark pathology slips with 'HCW' to ensure the swabs can be easily identified for priority testing.
- Doctors are reminded to ensure they include a mobile contact number on pathology slips for patients who have been tested.
- Physical (social) distancing measures should be consistently applied, if at all possible, including in clinical settings. The rule of 1 person for every 4 square metres must be maintained to ensure a safe physical distance.

Current directions arising from the declared state of emergency

A range of restrictions are in place and include, staying at home, restrictions on particular activities, detention, restrictions on airports and cruise ships, aged care, hospitals and isolation.

These are defined in a list of Directions from the Chief Health Officer are in effect and can be [viewed at the department's website](#).

Healthcare system

- A deal has been struck with the state's major private hospital operators to ensure they can continue to care for Victorians during the coronavirus pandemic.
- The deal will see Victoria's public and private hospitals work together to relieve pressure on public hospitals and ensure the entire health system is operating at full capacity.

Flu Vaccinations

- All Victorians are encouraged to get their Flu Vaccination, now available from Pharmacies and GPs. The vaccination cannot protect you from COVID-19 but will ensure your immunity isn't compromised further by contracting Influenza.
- From 1 April, Victorian pharmacists can administer approved vaccinations outside of their normal location – through the mobile and outreach services of a hospital, pharmacy or pharmacy depot, increasing access to immunisations for all Victorians.

- It is also easier for younger Victorians to get these immunisations from their local pharmacy. Appropriately trained pharmacists can now administer the flu shot to children 10 years of age and older.
- Pharmacists will also be able to administer the measles-mumps-rubella, meningococcal ACWY and whooping cough-containing vaccines to people 15 years of age and older – protecting young people from deadly diseases that, combined with the threat of coronavirus, could overwhelm the state’s hospitals.

Expanded testing criteria

- With reducing numbers of returning travellers, Victoria’s testing criteria will focus on an expanded range of frontline healthcare workers to include paid or unpaid workers in healthcare, residential care, disability care, homelessness support and child protection workers, as well as police officers.

More information

Clinical information

[Health services and general practice - coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)

Consumer information

[About Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - information for the general public](#)

[World Health Organization - health topic - Coronavirus](#) 

[Smartraveller website](#) 

Contacts

A public information hotline is provided by Health Direct – 1800 675 398.

Medical practitioners needing clinical information or to notify suspected or confirmed cases can contact the Department of Health and Human Services Communicable Diseases Section on 1300 651 160 (24 hours).

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The department acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

The department is committed to safe and inclusive work places, policies and services for people of LGBTIQ communities and their families.



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