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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.

04/04/2020

What's new?

Developments in the outbreak


- As of 4 April 2020, Victoria has 1,115 total confirmed cases (an increase of 30 since yesterday), 42 people are in hospitals including 10 people in intensive care. Sadly, eight people have died. 73 cases in Victoria have been identified from an unknown source (an increase of 11 since yesterday). In total, 527 people have recovered.
- Of the total 1,115 cases, there have been 894 in metropolitan Melbourne and 209 in regional Victoria. A number of cases remain under investigation.
- The total number of cases in Australia is currently 5,380. That is expected to increase significantly in coming weeks unless people stay at home.
- Up-to-date [epidemiological data](#)  is available on our website.
- The Victorian Government now has 1000 people working-around-the-clock on contact tracing.
- New COVID-19 resources have been developed to provide guidance to GPs and health services including [chronic disease management](#), [palliative and end of life care](#), and advice for immunisations services.

- New [mental health and wellbeing](#) advice has been updated with a number of electronic resources available.
- A detailed [FAQ on the stay at home](#) directions has been developed and published on our website.

Updated advice to clinicians

- Deaths due to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection must be notified to the department as soon as possible. Call 1300 651 160 (24 hours, seven days).
- 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.
- 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.

Key messages for the community


- Stay home. Protect the health system. Save lives.
- There are only four reasons to leave home:
 - shopping for what you need - food and essential supplies
 - medical, care or compassionate needs
 - exercise in compliance with the public gathering requirements
 - work and study if you can't work or learn remotely
- We're asking Victorians to stop looking for loopholes. The advice is clear, by staying at home you're saving lives.
- If you are caring for someone with COVID-19, further information is available [here](#) .

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

- 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.
- The Minister for Health has established the Coronavirus (COVID-19) health workforce response website at <https://healthworkforceresponse.dhhs.vic.gov.au>  to attract expressions of interest in working in the Victorian health system in both clinical and non-clinical roles. To date, more than 6,000 expressions of interest have been received.

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](#) 

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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Contact

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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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