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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.

05/04/2020

What's new?

Developments in the outbreak

- As of 5 April 2020, Victoria has 1,135 total confirmed cases (an increase of 20 since yesterday), 47 people are in hospitals including 11 people in intensive care. Sadly, eight people have died. 75 cases in Victoria have been identified from an unknown source (an increase of 2 since yesterday). In total, 573 people have recovered.
- Of the total 1,135 cases, there have been 911 in metropolitan Melbourne and 212 in regional Victoria. A number of cases remain under investigation.
- The total number of cases in Australia is currently 5,467. That is expected to increase significantly in coming weeks unless people stay at home.
- There have been 139 confirmed cases in healthcare workers, across at least 4 hospitals and 1 radiology clinic.
- Healthcare workers and paramedics who test positive to coronavirus (COVID-19) or are close contacts of confirmed cases can now self-isolate or self-quarantine in free hotel rooms under the Hotels for Heroes program.
- There have been changes to the case definition. New [guidelines](#) are available on this site.

- Up-to-date [epidemiological data](#)  is available on our website.
- The Victorian Government now has 1000 people working-around-the-clock on contact tracing.

Updated advice to clinicians

- The case definition has been expanded to include any person aged 65 years or older and people who have worked in public facing roles in the following settings:
 - firefighters who undertake emergency medical response
 - childcare and early childhood education centres
 - primary or secondary schools.
- Any in patient with fever OR acute respiratory symptoms and no other cause can also be tested.
- 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.
- 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 this site.

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 on this site](#).

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.

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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