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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 coronavirus (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 coronavirus (COVID-19).

07/07/2020

What's new?

- As of 7 July 2020, the total number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in Victoria is 2,824, with 191 new cases since yesterday's report.
- The overall total has increased by 164, with 27 reclassified, largely due to duplication. Of the new cases, 37 are linked to outbreaks and 154 remain under investigation. No case has been detected in a returned traveller in hotel quarantine.
- 438 cases have been acquired in Australia where the source of infection is unknown.
- 35 people are in hospital, including nine patients in intensive care. 22 people have died, no increase since yesterday's report. 2028 people have recovered.
- Of the total 2,824 cases, there have been 2,469 in metropolitan Melbourne and 261 in regional Victoria. Several cases remain under investigation.
- More than 979,000 test results have been received by the department since 1 January 2020.
- Further details can be found in [today's coronavirus \(COVID-19\) media release](#).
- Up-to-date [epidemiological data is available on our website](#).

Stay at Home Directions

- The Victorian Government has announced Stay at Home Directions for metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire from 11:59pm on Wednesday 8 July until 11.59pm on Wednesday 19 August.
- The area returning to Stage 3 'Stay at Home' restrictions is comprised of 31 metropolitan Melbourne local government areas (LGA) and the Mitchell Shire LGA.
- For six weeks, people who live in these areas are only allowed to go out for four reasons: shopping for food and supplies, health care and caregiving, outdoor exercise, and study or work – if unable to work or study from home.

Extra support for Flemington and North Melbourne Housing Estates

- The Direction that applies to the public housing towers will be lifted and replaced with the 'Stay at Home' directions as per the rest of Melbourne when it is safe to do so.
- Two field emergency management units have been established – staffed by medical workers, GPs and nurses, with pharmacotherapy and medicines available on site. This includes mental health and drug and alcohol support from both peer-support workers and clinicians.
- The Royal Melbourne Hospital has partnered with St John Ambulance to establish a 30 bed urgent care clinic at the Melbourne Showgrounds to provide critical and comprehensive first aid to residents if needed.
- The Inner North COVID Response Line has been activated to provide information and support to the residents of the locked down postcodes and community housing tours. Further information is available on 1800 961 054 with an interpreter service available on 131 450.
- Recognising the financial burden lockdown will place on many residents, a \$750 hardship payment will be provided to affected households and \$5,000 grants to affected businesses.
- The Department of Health and Human Services will also provide two weeks of rent relief for all tenants in locked down estates.
- Translators are onsite and will be doorknocking to help explain the directions and understand the individual assistance tenants might need.
- The Community Connector program will be delivered in partnership with the Red Cross, local government and other organisations linking Victorians experiencing loneliness or social disconnection with a friendly ear and lending a hand to get online, arrange for pet care or connect to local supports.
- The Victorian Government will continue providing one-off \$1,500 payments to support workers who are required to self-isolate because they are diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19) or they are a close contact of a confirmed case but can't rely on sick leave when missing work.

Current advice to clinicians

- Practitioners should test any patients who meet the clinical criteria below

Fever OR chills in the absence of an alternative diagnosis that explains the clinical presentation*

OR

Acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, anosmia or loss of smell or loss of taste)

Note: In addition, testing is recommended for people with new onset of other clinical symptoms consistent with COVID-19** AND who are close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19; who have returned from overseas in the past 14 days; or who are healthcare or aged care workers.

**Clinical discretion applies including consideration of the potential for co-infection (e.g. concurrent infection with SARS-CoV-2 and influenza)*

***headache, myalgia, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea*

- If referring your patients for coronavirus (COVID-19) testing, a list of testing locations can be found on the [getting tested for coronavirus page](#).
- Any coronavirus (COVID-19) test reported by a laboratory as having detected SARS-CoV-2 on PCR will be treated as positive for the purposes of public health actions, regardless of repeat testing of the sample. It is not appropriate to advise a patient that a test is a false positive. Current processing time for coronavirus (COVID-19) tests is one to three days.
- Practitioners are encouraged to also consider testing for other infectious diseases as warranted by the patient's clinical presentation and history, including travel history. Test for influenza in patients presenting with compatible respiratory symptoms and request a stool culture in patients presenting with gastrointestinal symptoms.

Key messages for the community

- Residents of the priority suburbs and in the current restricted postcodes will receive free testing – with or without symptoms. For more information go to the [Response to outbreaks page](#).
- People who are asymptomatic and awaiting test results do not need to self-isolate. But if people feel unwell or have any of the coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms they should self-isolate.
- Residents of these suburbs should not seek asymptomatic testing from their general practitioner, rather visit a site listed on our [Getting tested webpage](#).
- If you feel unwell with any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, you should stay home and get tested. If you have any fever, chills, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, and loss of sense of smell or taste – stay home, don't go in to work and don't visit friends and family. Get tested and stay at home until you get the result. [Go to the DHHS testing map for locations](#).
- Nasopharyngeal swabs collected by trained healthcare workers remains the gold standard test. Victoria commenced limited saliva testing in hotspots as part of department-led enhanced surveillance activities.
- On 6 July, Premier Daniel Andrews announced that New South Wales (NSW) will temporarily shut its border with Victoria to contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). The closure is effective from 12.01am on 8 July and Victorians currently in NSW do not have to self-isolate when returning to Victoria. There will be provisions in place for residents of border regions.

More information

Clinical information

[Latest coronavirus information for Victorian health services and general practice](#)

Consumer information

[Translated resources in over 50 languages](#)

[Victoria's current restrictions](#)

[COVID-19 suburban testing blitz - hotspots](#)

[Latest coronavirus information from the World Health Organization](#)

[Latest travel advice from Smartraveller](#)

Contacts

Medical practitioners needing clinical information or to notify 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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