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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).

9/2/2021

What's new?

- Victoria has recorded no new cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) since yesterday (data reported to 11:59pm 8 February 2021). Two new cases were reported late today that will be included in tomorrow's numbers.
- The total number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases reported in Victoria is now 20,456
- There were no new deaths and the state's death toll stands at 820.
- The number of active cases in Victoria is 15, which is made up of three locally acquired cases and 12 cases in returned travellers in hotel quarantine.
- A total of 4,582,916 test results have been received. This is an increase of 12,816 since yesterday.
- The Department was this morning informed that a returned traveller tested positive to coronavirus (COVID-19) after completing their 14-day quarantine.
- You can find further details in today's [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) media release](#).
- The DHHS website has full details in the [interactive daily report](#).

New cases

- A resident of the Hotel Quarantine facility at Holiday Inn Melbourne Airport has tested

positive to coronavirus (COVID-19) after completing their 14-day quarantine and being cleared for release. A strong public health response is now underway that builds on measures already in place.

- The individual tested negative a number of times during her quarantine period and departed the facility on 7 February. She sought testing in response to the current outbreak at the Holiday Inn, returning a positive result today, 9 February.
- Interviews with the individual are underway. Early indications are that the individual has not left her home since exiting Hotel Quarantine on 7 February, other than to obtain a test in a COVIDsafe setting.
- Updates to exposure site locations (if any), primary close contacts and other information will be provided as soon as possible.
- Primary close contacts will include past residents of one floor of the Holiday Inn who completed their quarantine period on 7 February. They will be required to self-isolate for 14 days. We are in contact with this group. This will come as difficult news to them, but we are being appropriately cautious in our response to this outbreak.
- A worker at Holiday Inn at Melbourne Airport has also tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). Interviews are underway and more detail will be provided as soon as possible.

Holiday Inn Airport case

- A full public health response to this case is continuing.
- Genomics from the case indicate it is a Variant of Concern. It is an identical sequence to a family who were staying at the Holiday Inn.
- Our public health actions were always based on the assumption this was the strain in question and these results confirm that. At this stage there is no clear suggestion of an infection prevention and control protocol breach.
- Eight household and family contacts have been identified. They are isolating and being tested. This is down from 17 yesterday, as nine were classified as workplace primary close contacts following interviews.
- As of this morning, around 136 hotel quarantine workers at the Holiday Inn have been identified as primary close contacts and are isolating and being tested.
- There are no additional public exposure sites. Current sites of this case are as follows:
 - Marciano's Cakes in Maidstone between 9:45am - 10:25am on Friday 5 February
 - Dan Murphy's Sunshine between 5:50pm - 6:30pm on Friday 5 February
 - Off Ya Tree Watergardens between 1:00pm - 1:52pm on Saturday 6 February
 - Dan Murphy's in Sunshine between 6:50pm - 7:30pm on Saturday 6 February
- Anyone who has visited these Tier 1 exposure sites during these dates and times must immediately isolate, get a coronavirus (COVID-19) test and remain isolated for 14 days.
- The number of primary close contacts linked to known exposure sites stands at 25. These numbers are likely to increase as investigations continue.
- Yesterday the Department sent around 107,000 text messages to people who live in Sunshine, Maidstone and Taylors Lakes.
- All current exposure sites can be seen at the [Case locations and outbreaks page](#). This website is rapidly updated as any new sites are identified.

Grand Hyatt

- The Department is continuing to follow up close contacts of a Hotel Quarantine worker at the Grand Hyatt Hotel who has tested positive to coronavirus (COVID-19) on 3 February.
- There are now 1318 primary close contacts in total identified with this case.
- This number includes 21 social and household primary close contacts. All have tested negative.
- There are 661 workplace contacts, who also have all tested negative.
- There are still 14 identified public exposure sites that were visited by the Grand Hyatt worker.
- As of this morning, 636 primary close contacts have now been identified in connection with these public exposure sites, up from 584.
- Anyone who has visited the exposure sites during these dates and times must immediately isolate, get tested, and remain isolated for 14 days from the time they were at the site - not just until they receive a negative result.
- Visit the [Where to get tested webpage](#) to view testing sites nearest you and see real-time waiting information. We thank people for their patience and apologise for any delays.

Face masks

- From 11:59pm on 3 February 2021 new statewide restrictions are in effect.
- Face masks are mandatory in indoor spaces, including workplaces. If you have visitors in your home, it is strongly recommended that face masks are worn during the visit. Face masks must be worn in indoor spaces apart from when eating or drinking. If you are planning to leave your home – take a face mask.
- In addition to indoor public spaces, face masks continue to be mandatory in the following locations:
 - on public transport
 - when riding in a ride share or taxi
 - on domestic flights to and from Victoria
 - at airports
- You must always carry a face mask with you when you leave home unless you have a lawful reason not to.
- It is strongly recommended you wear one whenever you cannot keep 1.5 metres distance from others.
- There are a number of [lawful reasons to not wear a face mask](#)

Update: Western Australia zone change

- Victoria's Chief Health Officer has declared the Perth metropolitan area, the Peel region and the South West region of Western Australia will move from a red zone to an orange zone under Victoria's 'traffic light' travel permit system at 9pm Victorian time, Friday 5 February.
- People in orange zones can apply for a permit to enter Victoria provided they have not been in close contact with a coronavirus (COVID-19) case and do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.

- On arrival in Victoria, orange zone permit holders must isolate at their home or accommodation, get a coronavirus (COVID-19) test, and continue isolating until they have received a negative result.
- Victoria's travel permit system provides the Department of Health the contact details of arrivals from orange and green zone areas, allowing the Department to advise them of any updated directions should the public health situation change in any state.
- To apply for a travel permit to enter Victoria, visit the [Service Victoria website](#).

New South Wales zone changes

- From 6:00pm 8 February, the Cumberland Local Government Area (LGA) in New South Wales will move from an orange zone to a green zone under Victoria's 'traffic light' travel permit system.
- People in green zones may apply for a permit to enter Victoria provided they have not been in close contact with a coronavirus (COVID-19) case and do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. On arrival in Victoria, they must monitor for symptoms and abide by local directions.

Testing sites and expanded testing

- Some 12,816 tests were processed yesterday. Almost 9,000 additional tests were reported from midnight to 8.30am this morning, which will be included in tomorrow's testing figures.
- Testing capacity near exposure sites in Melbourne's north west is being enhanced.
- Testing sites at Shorten Reserve in West Footscray and Victoria University St Albans campus will both be open until 8pm tonight, and Melbourne Showgrounds until 6:30pm. Closing times may be impacted by wait times.
- Capacity will also be expanded at other sites and our Rapid Response Testing Team will expand pop up testing, with details to come.
- The department is publishing expected wait times at testing sites as well as updated information about locations and hours of operation at [Where to get tested](#).
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing remains one of the best ways we can keep people safe and stay open, so we're asking anyone with symptoms to come and get tested – regardless of the time of year.
- Testing sites are also operating in the popular summer destinations at Torquay, Lorne, and the Mornington Peninsula.
- Testing site details, including new and pop-up testing sites and opening hours, are available at [Where to get tested](#).

Wastewater monitoring

- We have boosted our wastewater surveillance. Daily testing has been undertaken at 25 surveillance sites in metropolitan Melbourne since Friday. All this sampling has produced no new detections.
- Across the rest of the State, a small number of one-off detections in regional areas has also resulted in more daily testing with no further detections.

- Following the weak detection of viral fragments from wastewater collected from Mt Beauty that was announced yesterday, a new site has been established to facilitate testing in the local area.
- The Mt Beauty Pop Up COVID-19 Testing Clinic is open this weekend and will operate from a clinic in Tennis Court Avenue from 9am-4pm on both days. It is a drive-through site and no appointment is required.
- Anyone who lives in or has visited the Mt Beauty, Tawonga and Tawonga South area from 26 January to 1 February is urged to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) if they have any symptoms, however mild.
- Weak detections of the virus in wastewater may be due to people who have recovered from COVID-19, but continue to shed the virus or from an active infectious case.
- A weak detection of viral fragments from wastewater in Lakes Entrance on 28 January has been confirmed following further analysis.
- Anyone who lives in or has visited Lakes Entrance from 26 to 28 January is urged to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) if they have any symptoms, however mild.
- Viral fragments of COVID-19 were detected in wastewater samples taken on 27 January in Castlemaine, Cowes, Pakenham and Warrnambool.
- Anyone who lives in or has visited these areas from 25 to 27 January is urged to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) if they have any symptoms, however mild.
- Viral fragments have been detected in wastewater samples recently taken from Gisborne, Hamilton and Leongatha.
- Anyone who lives in or has visited Gisborne from 24 to 26 January 2021, Hamilton from 25 to 27 January 2021 or Leongatha from 17 to 19 January 2021, is urged to get tested if they have any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild.
- Victoria's wastewater surveillance program has now expanded to 95 sites which are regularly tested for early-warning of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- As always, it remains vitally important that any Victorians with any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, no matter how mild, stay home and get tested.

Current advice to clinicians

- Clinicians should be asking patients if they are from or if they have been in New South Wales, Western Australia or New Zealand and if so, to check the areas of risk defined by the NSW, WA and NZ governments and recommended actions.
- [Statement on Rapid Antigen Testing for SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\) diagnosis in symptomatic persons](#) (Word).
- Notifications to the department of a confirmed diagnosis of coronavirus (COVID-19) can be done online. You can submit an [online form](#) to our public health team, rather than calling us, saving you time and resolving your case load more efficiently.

COVID-19 testing criteria

- 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, or loss or changes in sense of smell or taste)
 - Note: testing is also recommended for people with new onset of other clinical symptoms consistent with coronavirus (COVID-19)** AND who are from the following cohorts: close contacts of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19); those who have returned from overseas in the past 14 days; or those who are healthcare or aged care workers. Testing is recommended for those cohorts with onset of other clinical symptoms**. Asymptomatic testing is not recommended at this stage except for targeted programs
 - *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](#).
 - If a symptomatic patient that presents for testing, confirms exposure to a known coronavirus (COVID-19) case within the past 14 days, and the outbreak definition is met, the test sample is to be treated as an 'outbreak sample'.

Victoria's restriction levels

- The State of Emergency has been extended until Friday 26 February 2021 to allow the Chief Health Officer's directions to remain in force.
- From 11:59pm on 3 February 2021 new statewide restrictions are in effect. Face masks are mandatory in public indoor spaces. The limit on the number of people gathering in a household is reduced from 30 to 15, meaning the household members plus 15 visitors (excluding children under 12 months of age).

Key messages for the community

- Testing is a critical help to keep numbers down so it's extremely important that if people have [symptoms](#), however mild, they get tested. Go home straight after your test and isolate while you wait for the results. Go to the [testing map](#) for locations.
- COVIDSafe principles apply across Victoria:
 - Face masks are mandatory in public indoor spaces, except when eating or drinking. If you have visitors in your home, it is strongly recommended that masks are worn during the visit. You must carry a mask when you leave your home.
 - Don't go to work if you feel unwell.
 - Maintain a physical distance of 1.5 metres.
 - Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow.
 - Wash hands with soap or use hand sanitiser regularly.
- The [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Home Safety Plan](#) (PDF) is available for download which tells you

what you need to know to help you, your family and friends stay safe and well.

- Many Victorians are feeling fatigued, isolated or lonely. If you are in need of support for your mental health there are [mental health resources](#) you can access on our website.
- If Victorians are not safe at home, they can seek help and support at an [Orange Door](#) or other family violence support service. If you or someone you know is at risk or experiencing family violence, call 000 in an emergency or safe steps 24/7 crisis service on 1800 015 188.
- The [Partners in Wellbeing](#) hotline (1300 375 330) is available for referrals from people who identify as LGBTIQ, multicultural, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, veterans and people experiencing homelessness.

Clinical information

- [Latest coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information for Victorian health services and general practice](#)
- [Latest information about providing immunisation services during Coronavirus Pandemic](#) (Word)
- [Andrew Wilson, Chief Medical Officer Safer Care Victoria, speaks about the importance of staff completing declarations to consider their health before they start work](#)

Online resources

- Locations of respiratory assessment clinics and testing sites are available [online and through an interactive map](#).
- Find out the latest information about visiting [care facilities](#) and [hospitals](#) on our website.
- [Protecting our healthcare workers](#) (PDF) sets out the very latest in our understanding of coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it can spread within healthcare settings – both hospitals and aged-care facilities. More information can be [found online](#).
- A new [Infection Prevention and Control](#) resource hub is now online, and includes a new factsheet on protective eyewear and the [Guide to the conventional use of PPE](#) (Word). Updated information for health care workers is available online on the [PPE coronavirus page](#).

Consumer information

- [Financial and other support for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Translated resources in over 50 languages](#)
- [Victoria's current restrictions](#)
- [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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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.

