

What do I do if I develop symptoms?

If you develop symptoms (fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath) within 14 days of arriving in Australia, or within 14 days of last contact of a confirmed case, you should arrange to see your doctor for urgent assessment.

You should telephone the health clinic or hospital before you arrive and tell them your travel history or that you may have been in contact with a potential case of coronavirus.

You must remain isolated either in your home, hotel or a health care setting until public health

Should I be tested for COVID-19?

Your doctor will tell you if you should be tested. They will arrange for the test.

You will only be tested if your doctor decides you meet the criteria:

- You have returned from overseas in the past 14 days and you develop respiratory illness with or without fever.
- You have been in close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case in the past 14 days and you develop respiratory illness with or without fever.
- You have severe community-acquired pneumonia and there is no clear cause.
- You are a healthcare worker who works directly with patients and you have a respiratory illness and a fever

If you meet any of these criteria, your doctor can request you are tested for COVID-19. It is important to remember that many people with symptoms similar to COVID-19 will not have the virus. Only suspected cases are tested to ensure our labs are able to cope with the demand. There is no need to test people who feel well and do not meet the criteria above.

Who needs to isolate?

All people who arrive in Australia from midnight 15 March 2020, or think they may have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, are required to self-isolate for 14 days.

Who is most at risk of a serious illness?

Some people who are infected may not get sick at all, some will get mild symptoms from which they will recover easily, and others may become very ill, very quickly. From previous experience with other coronaviruses, the people at most risk of serious infection are:

- people with compromised immune systems (e.g. cancer)
- elderly people

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as they have higher rates of chronic illness
- people with diagnosed chronic medical conditions
- very young children and babies*
- people in group residential settings
- people in detention facilities.

**At this stage the risk to children and babies, and the role children play in the transmission of COVID-19, is not clear. However, there has so far been a low rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children, relative to the broader population.*

How is the virus treated?

There is no specific treatment for coronaviruses. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses. Most of the symptoms can be treated with supportive medical care.

Should I wear a face mask?

You do not need to wear a mask if you are healthy. While the use of masks can help to prevent transmission of disease from infected patients to others, masks are not currently recommended for use by healthy members of the public for the prevention of infections like coronavirus.

Limits on essential gatherings

Essential gatherings must continue to adhere to the following guidance and restrict the number of people present to 500 for outdoor gatherings and 100 for indoor gatherings.

Essential activities include:

- health care settings
- pharmacies
- food shopping
- schools

These essential indoor gatherings should apply social distancing and good hygiene practices:

- Maintain a distance of 1.5 metres between people.
- Provide hand hygiene products and suitable rubbish bins, with frequent cleaning and waste disposal.

Special restrictions remain in place for aged care facilities to protect older Australians. Further information for residents of residential aged care services, their family members and visitors can be found at www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources.

Public transport is essential and, at this stage, the 100 person limit does not apply. This will be reviewed regularly. Non-essential travel is to be avoided.

These precautions are most important for people over 60 and those with chronic disease.

More information

If you feel unwell, you **must immediately isolate yourself at home** and contact the HMC as soon as possible to ensure we do not place the health, safety and wellbeing of other clients, staff and volunteers at risk.

Contact your doctor or health professional or the call the **National Coronavirus Help Line** on **1800 020 080** as soon as possible.

Should you require assistance with translation or interpreting service, please call **131 450**.

Translated resources on Coronavirus and how to stay safe can be found in multiple languages at www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus-resources-cald.aspx



COVID-19 Support Program and FAQ



Australian Government
Department of Health



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- T 02 4960 8248
- F 02 4960 8249
- E office@huntermulticultural.org.au
- P PO Box 318, Waratah NSW 2298
- A Waratah Community Reserve,
2a Platt Street, Waratah NSW 2298
- W www.huntermulticultural.org.au

To assist our members, we've put together a new support program and facts on COVID-19 based upon Australian Government advice.

Please contact us at any time if you need any support or are feeling depressed or isolated during this crisis –

WE ARE HERE TO HELP AND SUPPORT YOU.

www.huntermulticultural.org.au

Dear HMC Clients,

I understand we have all watched recent emergency events such as the devastating bushfires and now the impact of the coronavirus pandemic with feelings of concern and uncertainty. Therefore, it is important that we remain flexible, adaptable and show unity.

I appreciate that these unprecedented social distancing and travel restrictions could give rise to increased physical and mental hardship, isolation and disengagement. Therefore, in the interests of health, safety and wellbeing of all HMC clients we are looking at ways in which the HMC can continue to provide essential services and support throughout these critical events and difficult times.

As such, we will be transitioning from our currently suspended program of Group Support (Health and Wellness Centres) to a Social Support Individual model which would extend to our current clients.

These will include:

- **Establishment of regular telephone communication from our staff and/or volunteers to check on client's welfare;**
- **Assistance with shopping accompanied by a HMC staff member/volunteer;**
- **Option to have shopping delivered by a HMC staff member/volunteer;**
- **Limited home visits (if appropriate); and**
- **Transport assistance to medical appointments**

These activities will be conducted in accordance with appropriate risk assessment and official health guidelines to ensure health and safety compliance as far as practicable.

As part of the contingency measures, our coordinators and volunteers will establish contact with all our existing clients to ascertain whether they would like to receive these services.

Please be assured that all necessary steps are being implemented to protect you, your families and our communities. Abiding by NSW Health advice and preventative measures will ensure we comply with our social responsibility to prevent the virus spreading further, while ensuring we offer support to our clients.

These services will be available until the HMC can recommence our normal business as activities across all of our centres.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as the HMC works hard to make the necessary adjustments to our services in order to support our clients during these difficult times.



Annette Gebhardt
Chief Executive Officer
Hunter Multicultural Communities Inc.

COVID-19 HMC Contingency Measures

Changes and extension to HMC Social Support Individual Program

During this difficult time, the Hunter Multicultural Communities (HMC) is endeavouring to provide additional assistance and support to those clients who usually attend our Social Support Group (Health and Wellness Centres).

The aim of these new services is to reduce the impacts of physical and mental isolation and will operate on a model which is currently utilised for our Social Support Individual clients. This will enable people who usually participate in one of our centres (group) to access essential services whilst remaining safe in their home environments.

All services below will:

- Comply and adopt all reasonable health and safety measures as far as practicable;
- Comply with social distancing requirements; and
- Continue through this period of change and uncertainty until further notice when the HMC resumes its usual services across all of our centres.

Clients will be able to transition from group to individual services which would include:

- **Establishment of regular telephone communication from HMC staff and/or volunteers to check on client's welfare;**
- **Assistance with shopping which would be accompanied by a HMC staff or volunteer.**
- **The option to have shopping delivered by a HMC staff member or volunteer.**
- **Transport assistance to medical appointments.**
- **Limited home visits reduce social isolation of our clients.**

These additional services will be available to our Social Support Group clients as long as required and until the HMC can recommence our usual services across all of our centres.

To inquire about the above HMC Contingency Services, the HMC's Social Support Individual Program and/or the Ethnic Neighbour Aid Program please phone your coordinator or the HMC on the numbers provided in the table.

To request assistance or service, please notify the HMC Coordinator at least two (2) days in advance.

The cost of the services:

- Travel up to 10km radius: **\$10.00**
- Travel 11km-20km radius: **\$15.00**
- Travel 21km-30km: **\$25.00**

Remember:

Please contact us at any time if you need any support or are feeling depressed or isolated during this crisis –

WE ARE HERE TO HELP AND SUPPORT YOU.

Gayle Grayson, ENAP Coordinator
0425 090 670 • gayle@huntermulticultural.org.au

Lucia Buxton, MFG Coordinator
0425 091 576 • lucia@huntermulticultural.org.au

Mary Moore, WMDCC & PSMDCC Coordinator
0425 409 301 • mary@huntermulticultural.org.au

Olya Hamiwka, Ukrainian Coordinator
0425 299 356 • ukrainian@huntermulticultural.org.au

Lonny Schall, NMDCC & WMDCC Coordinator
0422 099 373 • lonny@huntermulticultural.org.au

Suzi Cvetanovski, Macedonian Coordinator
0434 429 166 • macedonian@huntermulticultural.org.au

Marina Lambert, Greek Coordinator
0478 813 337 • greek@huntermulticultural.org.au

Lambrini Angelos, H/A Greek Coordinator
0435 958 352 • holyapostles@huntermulticultural.org.au

Mariola Kolbas, Polish Coordinator
0413 043 352 • polish@huntermulticultural.org.au

Ruza Rakanovic, Westlakes Coordinator
0431 466 160 • westlakes@huntermulticultural.org.au

Adriana Hannemann, Central Coast Coordinator
0458 607 777 • centralcoast@huntermulticultural.org.au

What is a coronavirus and COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses known to cause respiratory infections. These can range from the common cold to more serious diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). This new coronavirus originated in Hubei Province, China and the disease caused by the virus is named COVID-19.

How is this coronavirus spread?

COVID-19 is most likely to spread from person-to-person through:

- close contact with a person while they are infectious or in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared
- close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes
- touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other colds and flus and include:

- fever
- sore throat
- cough
- tiredness
- difficulty breathing.

While coronavirus is of concern, it is important to remember that most people displaying these symptoms are likely suffering with a cold or other respiratory illness – not coronavirus.

How can we help prevent the spread of coronavirus?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene and keeping your distance from others when you are sick is the best defence against most viruses. You should:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash your hands.
- If unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people).
- Exercise personal responsibility for social distancing measures.