

# COVID-19 Client Update



VERSION 34

As of 19 November 2020

## To all PQSA and HomeCare+ clients

We are committed to the health and safety of each one of you and anyone associated with the provision of our services.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is presenting significant challenges to many of you. Our aim is to ensure you continue to receive quality support from us throughout this health crisis, so are constantly listening to and acting on the best possible health policy and expert medical advice.

To assist you to understand how we can continue to support you and keep you as safe as possible, we have developed a list of common questions and answers.

If you still have any queries at all, please don't hesitate to contact us on **(08) 8355 3500** or email your questions to **humanresources@pqsa.asn.au**.

We will be making sure information is updated on our two websites:

PQSA

**[www.pqsa.asn.au/corona-virus-advice](http://www.pqsa.asn.au/corona-virus-advice)**

HomeCare+

**[www.homecareplus.asn.au/news/coronavirus-update-for-our-clients](http://www.homecareplus.asn.au/news/coronavirus-update-for-our-clients)**

You can also call the Coronavirus Health Information Line on **1800 020 080**.

COVIDSafe App has been launched! You can download this app now and join Australia's effort to keep our communities safe. For more information visit **[www.covidsafe.gov.au/help-topics.html](http://www.covidsafe.gov.au/help-topics.html)**

## >> WHERE DOES PQSA/HOMECARE+ GET ITS CURRENT EXPERT ADVICE REGARDING COVID-19?

Like you, we monitor the news, but we predominantly access current advice from official federal and state government websites, which also include great practical information for you, our client and for us as a service provider:

Australian Government Department of Health  
**[www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert](http://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert)**

National Disability Insurance Agency  
**[www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/ndis-and-other-government-services/ndis-and-disaster-response](http://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/ndis-and-other-government-services/ndis-and-disaster-response)**

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission  
**[www.ndiscommission.gov.au/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-information](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-information)**

SA Health

**[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Public+Content/SA+Health+Internet](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Public+Content/SA+Health+Internet)**

## >> WHAT IS PQSA/HOMECARE+ DOING TO DISRUPT TRANSMISSION OF THE VIRUS?

We are doing all we reasonably can to follow expert advice to ensure we support the national effort to ensure transmission of COVID-19 is disrupted. Fortunately, this has meant minimal suspension of services which do not significantly disadvantage our clients.

We are also implementing measures to ensure staff comply with government initiatives, such as forced self-isolation following overseas and interstate travel.

All of our staff are receiving information and education regarding key infection control measures, including:

- Effective handwashing and hygiene (including the appropriate use of hand sanitiser)
- Coughing and sneezing etiquette
- Social distancing measures
- Effective work from home initiatives where possible (and without interrupting client supports)
- Understanding signs and symptoms and what to do if they are unwell or suspect they may have the virus
- Clear directions about not coming to work if they feel unwell
- How to support you if you are worried you have symptoms of the virus

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We are also in regular communication and meet with government departments to ensure issues relating to the support of people with disabilities in SA are raised; this includes making sure we have a sustainable workforce and that essential supplies, such as toilet paper, cleaning products and medical equipment is available.

## >> HOW CAN YOU ASSIST PQSA/HOMECARE+ TO DISRUPT TRANSMISSION OF THE VIRUS?

The main thing that you can do is to let us know if your circumstances change, such as feeling unwell, having others in the home who are feeling unwell or if you have been forced to self-isolate.

Please be assured that under these circumstances, we will work with you to ensure you have the level of safe and quality service to meet your needs.

You can also assist by making sure our staff are able to access handwashing facilities and by limiting the number of visitors to your home as per government guidelines – the government does recommend alternative ways of connecting, such as videoconferencing, so please let us know if you need assistance with this.

## >> DO PQSA/HOMECARE+ NEED TO WEAR MASKS AND GLOVES WHEN PROVIDING MY SUPPORT?

Face masks are not advised outside of healthcare settings, unless a client is displaying symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough, fatigue and difficulty breathing. In those circumstances, you should of course seek medical advice as soon as possible.

You can help us assess the need for staff to wear face masks by letting us know if you or people in your home have those symptoms.

Gloves are generally not required except for specific health procedures that involve the handling of bodily fluids. Hand hygiene is always important whether gloves are used or not!

## >> WILL MY SERVICES BE AFFECTED BY THIS?

We are doing everything we possibly can to ensure your services are not affected by the virus. Any decision to suspend a service has been and will be made on the basis of minimal disadvantage to our clients and maximising client safeguarding.

The reality is that, like you, we currently can't predict how much the virus will spread but we are planning for every scenario. It is possible that your choice and control regarding what services you receive, when they are delivered and who delivers your support will be affected. But we will always discuss these issues with you so there is the least possible disruption to your lifestyle.

## >> WILL YOU SEND UNQUALIFIED STAFF TO PROVIDE MY SERVICES?

We are still required and are committed to providing you safe, quality services delivered by appropriately qualified and trained staff.

Where changes to how your supports are provided may be affected, we will always discuss how to manage this in the best way possible with you.

## >> I BELIEVE I NEED TO BE TESTED FOR COVID-19 BUT I CAN'T ACCESS TESTING FACILITIES BECAUSE OF MY DISABILITY. WHAT CAN I DO?

Speak to your GP or health clinician and ask them to contact SA Pathology to try and arrange for their Domiciliary Collection Service to visit you.

You can get more information about this service at [www.sapathology.sa.gov.au](http://www.sapathology.sa.gov.au)

## >> FURTHER INFORMATION

We will continue to update you regularly via email/post and will update any relevant resources on our websites. The government websites listed above are the best source of current general information.