



Message from the Chief Executive COVID-19 UPDATE



Health
South Eastern Sydney
Local Health District

30 March, 2020

I want to thank all staff for your efforts over the past few months. I want to particularly acknowledge the teams that have been deployed to the airport since the start of 1 February 2020. Our team of nurses, doctors and interpreters have been doing a tremendous job screening travellers arriving at the international terminal. This process has been incredibly important in preventing widespread outbreak of COVID-19 in the community to date.

Current state

As of today, there were 1,918 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New South Wales. While we are seeing an increased number of confirmed cases across the state and in our district, we also have a very high rate of testing which provides us with reassurance that we are detecting cases of COVID-19 in the community. The vast majority of cases are connected to travellers returning to Australia from overseas, or those that have had close contact with known COVID-19 cases.

Further restrictions have been rolled out in the last few days. This includes further limiting of public gatherings to two people and compulsory isolation of returned travellers for two weeks in hotels. The importance of social distancing cannot be understated at this time. It remains important that all of us continue to practice this and encourage our family and friends do the same.

COVID-19 livestream panel discussion

It was encouraging to see so many staff watching the panel discussion with Dr Marianne Gale, Director, Population and Community Health, Dr Jeffrey Post, Head, Department of Infectious Diseases, Prince of Wales Hospital and myself last Friday. I want to again apologise to anyone that was unable to join given we had the maximum number of participants that the system could cater for. For those staff who were not able to dial into the panel discussion, a recording is available via: <http://seslhnweb/COVID/paneldiscussion.asp>. Thank you to those staff who have provided feedback. Based on this we will endeavour to undertake these sessions regularly.

Staff wellbeing

Ensuring our workforce remains safe during this time is our number one priority. Managers will be speaking with their teams at the beginning of each shift to discuss their wellbeing. I remind you that if you are experiencing either Fever or Respiratory Symptoms (sore throat, cough, and shortness of breath) you need to self-isolate and seek medical advice and COVID-19 testing. We encourage you to attend one of our COVID-19/Flu Assessment Clinics located at Randwick, Sydney/Sydney Eye Hospital, St George and Sutherland hospitals. The SESLHD Intranet page has a list of clinic locations: http://seslhnweb/COVID/Staff_Clinics.asp

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

NSW Health is continuing to source a range of PPE from both existing and new suppliers in order to ensure ongoing supply and it is important to reiterate that these are used appropriately. I want to reinforce that staff safety is our number one priority and we will ensure that staff are provided with the appropriate PPE. However, we do require your help to do this. PPE should only be used as indicated to ensure that we continue to have supplies to support our frontline staff.

For more information, including a link to the CEC's guidelines around the use of PPE please visit <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/ppe.aspx>

Staff flu vaccination

Shortly we will commence the annual flu vaccination programme across the District. In response to social distancing requirements, roving flu vaccination teams have commenced at each of our facilities. General Managers and District Directors will notify staff of dates, times and locations of where these teams will visit.

Workforce update

New information has now been uploaded to the Intranet regarding rapid on boarding for short term employees related to the COVID-19 situation http://seslhnweb/COVID/staff_factsheets.asp. On boarding new staff will be actioned outside the Recruitment and on boarding (ROB) system. Managers will need to provide certain information relating to the new staff that the Recruitment and Workforce Transaction team will submit to HealthShare. Staff are reminded to check the Intranet site for the latest fact sheets and information relating to workforce services.

Telehealth

The Telehealth team has been working with site and clinical champions to survey outpatient clinic rooms and document their readiness for Telehealth. Aligned with the work of the COVID-19 Operational Response Team, this will enable us to prioritise the roll out of Telehealth capability and processes to outpatient clinic rooms. Last week we were pleased to see the first delivery of Telehealth peripherals including webcams, with headsets due to arrive this week. Friday saw the successful pilot of our Telehealth service to a Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF), with additional RACFs in the Sutherland area to be included in the pilot before scaling across the district.

ACI are now running daily webinar training sessions on the use of Pexip, the preferred platform for delivering telehealth services. These training sessions can be booked through My Health Learning, and will run at 8am, 10am, 2pm, 4pm and 8pm daily.

The SESLHD Telehealth intranet page will go live this week and will include educational resources and user guides. The information available on this page will grow over time and you are encouraged to keep an eye out for updates. Operational support and guidance, including the scheduling of test calls can be made via SESLHD-telehealth@health.nsw.gov.au.

Translated posters

Translated posters on the revised visitors policy and COVID-19 Testing Clinics are now available on the Intranet <http://seslhnweb/COVID/resources.asp>

Good Hygiene

The best way to protect yourself and others is to practise good hand and respiratory hygiene -

- Clean your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue or flexed elbow.
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.
- Stay home if you are sick.

A great deal of work has been done by our staff as we continue to respond to this emerging public health event and I thank you again for your hard work and commitment. Please refer to the [NSW Health website](#), the [NSW Government's site](#), and the [Commonwealth's Department of Health site](#) for the latest information.

Regards,

Tobi Wilson
Chief Executive



PLEASE PRINT A COPY OF THIS NOTICE FOR THOSE STAFF WHO DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO EMAILS