

18 March 2020

Dear Friends of MACS,

As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread, we want to take a moment to let you know what MACS is doing to respond. We feel it is important to connect directly with you to share more about the steps we are taking across our organisation to help keep customers, staff and our community safe and healthy.

The health of both customers and our team are our priority. We all need to follow government health recommendations in relation to self-isolation and testing. As a customer if your test result is positive and you are unable to self-isolate due to your disability, it is imperative that we assist you to present to a hospital setting that can manage your needs until you have recovered.

Any customers and staff that are unwell and have been exposed to anyone with the coronavirus are asked to please advise our office team to ensure that we can manage any further risk to the team and customers within MACS community.

To demonstrate our commitment to customers and staff, we have outlined what measures we currently have in place:

- We request customers allow staff to wash their hands on arrival and departure of each residence
- As usual we have availability of hand sanitizers, gloves and masks for our workers
- We are monitoring all travel of our employees and ensure they meet the requirements to self-isolate
- Mandatory training. All staff have completed Supporting People to Stay Infection Free Module and are in the process of completing the COVID-19 Infection Control Module released yesterday by the Australian Government
- Employees not feeling well with COVID-19 symptoms need to stay home and will require a fitness for work clearance before resuming duties
- If a customer is unwell or has symptoms they should wear a surgical face mask and follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette. Staff will also wear a face mask when assisting unwell customers. *Customers are encouraged to purchase additional masks via their NDIS consumables allocation.*
- We practice individual requests from our customers if they have additional measures
- A contactless thermometer has been provided for staff to test their temperature prior to the commencement of a shift (optional)

Please help us maintain services to our customers by adhering to the following advice:

Prevention and early detection is the best form of defence. It is for this reason we are asking everyone – our staff, customers, families and carers to do the following:

Self-monitor/watch for symptoms of the illness

- Fever/temperature
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Excessive tiredness
- Muscle aches and pains
- Feeling generally unwell.

Practice good hygiene

- Please wash hands and use the hand sanitisers provided upon entry and exit of our office and in between as necessary throughout shifts
- Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap upon arrival and when leaving a customer's home, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash hands /use hand sanitiser.
- Where possible avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people). Understandably this will be impossible when providing personal care so everyone needs communicate with us if you are unwell or have concerns and use PPE provided.

Seek guidance if unwell with COVID-19 symptoms:

- If you are severely unwell, such as having difficulty breathing, call 000 (Triple Zero) or go directly to a hospital emergency department.
- If you have travelled anywhere overseas in the past 14 days and have COVID-19 symptoms (especially fever or cough), seek testing at an official COVID-19 clinic or alternatively contact your GP (call ahead so your GP is prepared and aware of your travel history) and isolate yourself.
- If you have NOT travelled overseas recently, but have symptoms or are feeling unwell, visit your usual health care provider as you normally would (call ahead so your GP is prepared).
- Avoid contact with others if you are unwell.

Travel restrictions and isolation

The following special restrictions apply to travellers:

- If you have travelled overseas in the last 14 days, you must self-isolate yourself for 14 days.
- If you have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, you must isolate yourself for 14 days after the date of last contact with the confirmed case.

Where can I get more information?

- For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au
- Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450
- What you need to know about COVID-19 <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

The mandatory courses for MACS staff are available for anyone to do at no cost, we encourage customers and families to do these and share with their support teams.

<https://covid-19training.com.au/login.php>

<https://training.disabilityservicesconsulting.com.au/products/infectionfree?fbclid=IwAR1VBd08fLsdnmfTY01mNqgAgQEB-hruFmGQWAbTtKS92PFRwkQ8GLioFmQ>

Any customers and staff that are unwell and/or have been exposed to anyone with the coronavirus are asked to please let our office team know by calling 3857 0333 or your Attendant immediately.

Kind regards,

Alison Herring,
Service Manager