



## **COVID – 19 Important Information for NovaCare Consumers and Families**

As you know, there is ongoing and growing concern about the spread of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus.

NovaCare is committed to providing a safe and comfortable environment for all our consumers. Being in contact with people can cause anxiety but we are taking steps to minimise risk. As a community aged care provider we have very specific circumstances to manage. These include:

- NovaCare support many people with suppressed or vulnerable immune systems
- Many of our services happen in group settings
- Social distancing is difficult to implement in group settings and on our buses
- Our consumers may have multiple visitors in their home
- Our consumers may be dependent on others for basic activities of daily living

While none of this means we need to panic, it does mean we need to respond responsibly in line with government and medical advice. NovaCare is following the directions of the World Health Organisation and the Department of Health.

**All Home Care Package and Commonwealth Home Support services will continue as usual. If you are concerned please talk to your Case Manager or Coordinator directly. When we experience sick leave we will talk to you about rescheduling with an alternate worker just like we always do.**

**The only change at this time is to social groups. All consumers that regularly attend our social groups have been contacted.**

**We will be sending out a social calendar for April it will include dates and time for the exercise groups that are going to continue.**

### **What is NovaCare doing to create a safe environment?**

- We have increased the frequency of environmental cleaning at our offices and day centres and on all our buses and cars.
- We will continue to provide support in the community, however, we will not be attending any group programs.

- We will avoid any activities that place people in close proximity to others for extended periods such as at our day centres and in the wider community. At this time we have placed our social group outings on hold.
- We are running additional education sessions on the importance of good hygiene with all support staff.
- We have cancelled all onsite meetings with our workers and teleconferencing will be utilised instead.
- Our staff will also not attend non-essential meetings or training at external sites.
- Our Coordinators that are not required to be physically present at the site and will work from home.
- Staff or clients who have returned from any overseas travel will be excluded from the service for 14 days and will require medical clearance before returning.
- Staff or clients displaying any symptoms of Coronavirus, will be isolated. We will keep in regular contact and provide clients services in a safe way until medical clearance is given.
- NovaCare will provide regular updates around what we are doing to keep us all safe.

#### **What you can do to stay safe.**

- If you are showing signs of a runny nose, sore throat, cough, fever or difficulty breathing or have recently returned from overseas please call us and we will talk to you about what to do next
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as this is the way infection spreads.
- Regularly wipe down surfaces on your home with household cleaning spray and wipe.
- Avoid situations where you may be in close contact with a lot of people including shopping centres.
- Read our newsletter updates and ask questions, we are only a phone call away.

#### **What are the next steps?**

We are meeting regularly with our Leadership Team and the NovaCare Board to discuss the current health advice and the impact on our service.

- As always, you should feel free to call your Coordinator if you have any concerns about your family member or the service.
- We will be continuing to monitor the information provided by the government to ensure the best response in keeping people safe and infection free.
- We need to acknowledge that at some point, this may mean your individual service will need to be delivered in a different way. We are working on contingency planning to reduce the impact on our clients and staff.
- We will keep you informed and provide as much lead-time possible if this is looking likely.

**If you are concerned that you or your loved one may have been effected please let us know so we can support you. Information can also be found by calling the following agencies:**

- The national 24/7 hotline triages people with respiratory symptoms and those who are concerned about contact with a possible Coronavirus case. If you think you may be infected you can call the triage hotline on 1800 020 080.
- Suspected Coronavirus patients can present in person to a GP clinic, a dedicated respiratory clinic or to a hospital ED if they call ahead.
- Please notify us ASAP.

We have included three information sheets for you to read and keep to refer back to and share with your family. Please keep them on the fridge or under your phone. Together we can help stop the spread and stay healthy.

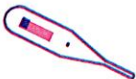









Thank you for your understanding as we continue to work together as a community to support each other through this time.

Regards

The NovaCare Team.



# COVID-19: IDENTIFYING THE SYMPTOMS

SYMPTOMS		COVID-19	COLD	FLU
		Symptoms range from mild to severe	Gradual onset of symptoms	Abrupt onset of symptoms
<b>Fever</b>		Common	Rare	Common
<b>Cough</b>		Common	Common	Common
<b>Sore Throat</b>		Sometimes	Common	Common
<b>Shortness of Breath</b>		Sometimes	No	No
<b>Fatigue</b>		Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
<b>Aches &amp; Pains</b>		Sometimes	No	Common
<b>Headaches</b>		Sometimes	Common	Common
<b>Runny or Stuffy Nose</b>		Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
<b>Diarrhea</b>		Rare	No	Sometimes, especially for children
<b>Sneezing</b>		No	Common	No

Adapted from material produced by WHO, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



**TOGETHER WE CAN HELP STOP  
THE SPREAD AND STAY HEALTHY.**

For more information about  
**Coronavirus (COVID-19)** visit [health.gov.au](https://health.gov.au)

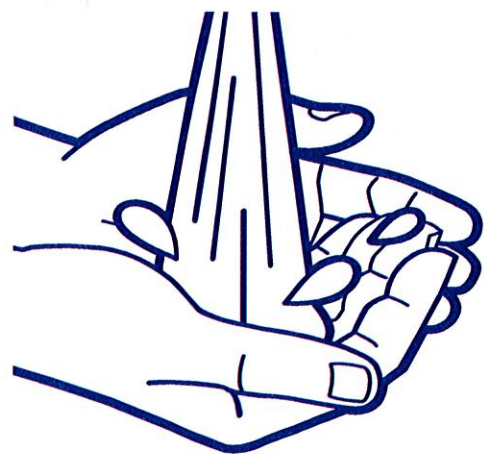


Australian Government



# Practise simple hygiene by washing hands regularly

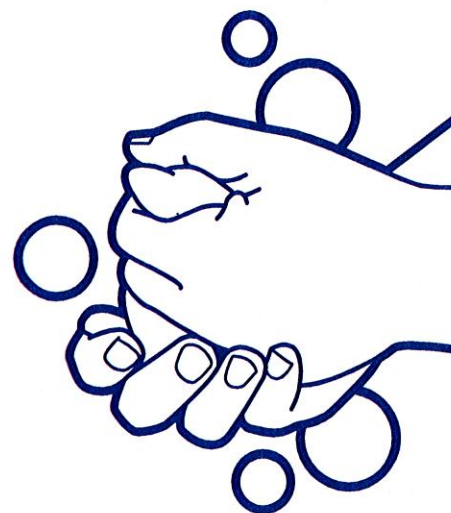
**1** Wet hands



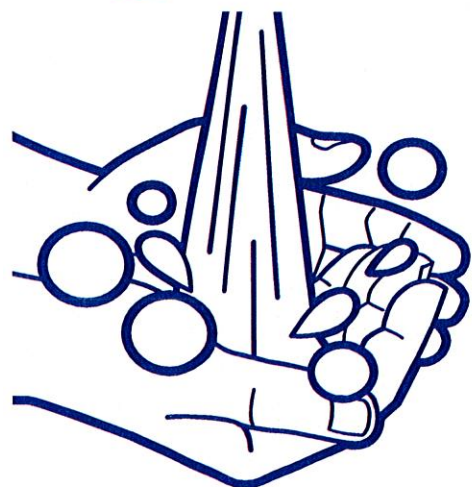
**2** Apply soap



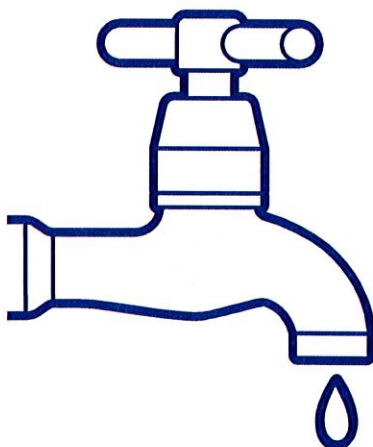
**3** Lather & scrub



**4** Rinse hands



**5** Turn off tap



**6** Dry hands



Spend **20 seconds** washing your hands.