



10 July 2020

COVID-19 Update

Globally the COVID-19 pandemic is still growing exponentially with the number of infections estimated to have doubled over the last six weeks. The World Health Organisation is reporting an estimated total of 12.2 million cases across the world with infections now rising by over 220,000 per day.

The situation in Australia is also troubling with Victoria trying to control a serious outbreak of community transmission. Close to 1500 cases have been detected over the last three weeks with a total of 288 cases reported today alone. As a consequence Melbourne and a number of surrounding suburbs have re-entered a strict lock down for another six weeks. After new cases in the ACT and NSW were connected to travel, restrictions to and from Victoria have also been imposed. All borders in and out of Victoria are closed and people in Victoria are only able to travel interstate if they have a permit/exemption. All people who have visited Victoria over the last 14 days are also being urged to minimise contacts and to get tested especially if they are displaying any kind of symptom.

The National Cabinet met today to discuss the situation and the focus is on supporting Victoria to manage and control the outbreak. Additional resources are being provided to help maintain the borders, as well as, to carry out contact tracing. Most other new and active cases across Australia are all linked to returning international travellers so to ease the situation and limit the number of cases National Cabinet also agreed to halve the number of international flights into Australia. Returning travellers will also now be charged for their period in hotel quarantine. To identify gaps and provide reassurance and confidence in regards to infection prevention and control standards a nationwide review into hotel quarantine has also been established.

The Prime Minister reinforced the need to protect against complacency – hand hygiene and social distancing must become the norm across Australia. Given new research and recommendations from the World Health Organisation those living in the Melbourne lock down areas are being encouraged to wear masks in situations where they cannot guarantee social distancing.

Wherever you are in Australia please stay vigilant and do what you can to minimise the risks to yourself and those around you.

Thanks again for the work that you do and please stay safe.

The NATSIHWA Team