

NESST Newsflash: Corona Version

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to the Corona NESST Newsflash.

Expect to see this each week for the foreseeable – we will try to capture the state of play at the close of each week.

If you wish to unsubscribe to this Newsletter, please reply to this email and NESST will remove you from our mailing list. 😊

New England Sector Support Team



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Table of Contents

NESST Newsflash: Corona Version.....	1
NESST goes hi-tech	1
Further expansion of CHSP Flexibility Provisions	2
Keeping up to date with Covid-19 in our region with PHN	2
COVID-19 Guide for Providers of in home aged care	2
Protecting Older Australians – Daily COVID-19 Update	2
Keep up to date with travel restrictions within Australia	2
CHSP Meals Provider Survey and funding boost	3
Modern Award Variations: Unpaid pandemic leave and ability to take additional accrued annual leave at half pay by agreement	3
Training modules	3
Influenza vaccinations - Restrictions on entry into aged care facilities	3
COVID-19 and Registered Charities	4

NESST goes hi-tech

This week we had our first Regional CHSP Webinar on Zoom. There were a few teething issues but the panel provided great information and it was positive to touch base with so many participants across the region. To view

We are going to have regular webinars and meetings on Zoom. The next Regional CHSP Webinar will be held on 29 April at 10am. We will send out an invitation closer to the day.

We are also working up some short on-line training sessions to help with starting new volunteers or frontline staff to cope with the increase in demand and the decrease in traditional volunteers.

Further expansion of CHSP Flexibility Provisions

CHSP providers have already been given full flexibility to allocate up to 100% of their existing funds in 2019-20 and 2020-21 between the different service types they deliver so that emerging client needs can be met. These provisions have now been expanded to allow providers to re-allocate funding across the Aged Care Planning Regions (ACPRs) in which they operate on a time-limited basis. Any reallocation of funds between ACPRs should be done cautiously and only on the following basis:

Providers must retain the ability to return to their current regional footprint post the COVID-19 crisis.

Providers must not leave a service gap in an area they are operating in – i.e. resources may only be reallocated out of a region where there is a clear drop in the need for the service (e.g. group social support).

Providers seeking to reallocate funds to a different region should make all efforts to ensure existing service providers in the area are not already ramping up to meet the perceived need (speak with your FAM and other providers in the area).

Providers may still only allocate resources to services they are funded to deliver.

CHSP providers are only expected to use these relaxed flexibility provisions to support time limited care needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, and funding agreements will not be amended to reflect the changed service mix.

Keeping up to date with Covid-19 in our region with PHN

To help us keep our region prepare for the expected increase in COVID-19 cases we ask that you encourage as many as your colleagues to subscribe to these regular updates. The subscription link can be accessed [HERE](#).

COVID-19 Guide for Providers of in home aged care

A guide to assist Home Care and Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) Providers who provide care to older people living at home is now available on the [department's website](#). This guide provides information and guidance on how to stay safe from COVID-19 including how providers can prepare their organisation, equipment and resources, and how staff and clients can manage COVID-19.

Other resource are available to assist the sector including [online training modules](#) and a [collection of guides and fact sheets](#). These are being updated as the situation evolves.

Protecting Older Australians – Daily COVID-19 Update

If you are not already receiving these messages for the aged care sector, you can subscribe at agedcare.health.gov.au/AgedCareUpdates

Keep up to date with travel restrictions within Australia

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-travellers#travel-within-australia>

CHSP Meals Provider Survey and funding boost

The Australian Government is offering an immediate one-off grant for all CHSP providers currently funded to deliver meals. The additional funding available will be up to 100 per cent of your scheduled grant payments over the next 6 months, where you are able to spend it. For simplicity, all additional funds will be paid based on the funded unit price in your current grant. Funders that this may have little bearing on the actual unit price during this period, for example, where the provision of meals is now more expensive due to the loss of volunteers that will need to be replaced by paid workers. There will be no penalties for providers that deliver at a higher price. You can use funds flexibility across ACPRs in which you are already funded to deliver meals. Client contributions will apply as normal.

The survey closed **Thursday 2 April 2020**. Those who were unable to complete the survey will automatically receive an offer of an additional 50 per cent of your scheduled funding between April and September.

Modern Award Variations: Unpaid pandemic leave and ability to take additional accrued annual leave at half pay by agreement

<https://acsa.asn.au/ACSA/media/General/Documents/Aged%20Care%20Emergency%20Planning/200401-MA-Variations-COVID.pdf>

The Full Bench of the Fair Work Commission has released a statement on Wednesday 1 April covering a swathe of awards and includes Aged Care, SCHDS, Nurses and HPSS. It is proposed the FWC will insert a schedule to the awards which will temporarily:

1. Provide all employees (including full-time, part-time and casual employees) with a new entitlement of up to 2 weeks' unpaid pandemic leave; and
2. Provide for employees by agreement with their employer to take twice the amount of their accrued annual leave at half pay. You can access information from specifically relating to workplace entitlements and obligations if you're affected by an outbreak of COVID-19 on the [Fair Work website](#).

Training modules

Seven modules are available for completion as part of the Department of Health's eLearning program for Aged Care workers. The training includes Personal Safety, Families and Visitors, Outbreak Management and PPE.

[Click here to register and access the training modules.](#)

Influenza vaccinations - Restrictions on entry into aged care facilities

The department has released further information to assist residential aged care providers to understand the entry restrictions to aged care facilities that related to 2020 influenza vaccinations. The [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document can be found on the department's website. [Read more](#)

COVID-19 and Registered Charities

The ACNC recognises that many charities may have to make difficult decisions at this time. The ATO and the ACNC recorded a free webinar for charities and not-for-profits, discussing the Government stimulus measure that affect them, as well as issues that are affecting charity operations during the COVID-19 crisis. The ATO discussed the implications of the Government's Boosting *Cash Flow for Employers* measure, including what's available to charities and NFPs and where to get advice. [View the webinar](#)