



NESST (New England Sector Support Team) Newsflash

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to this week's edition of the NESST Newsflash. The table of contents is now interactive, so if you see an article you'd like to read, just press the Ctrl key and click on the link in the table of contents and you will be taken directly to the article.

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



Phone: 02 6772 3950

## Upcoming Training

Hi all, I am sorry to advise that we, at NESST, have decided to cancel all upcoming events and training until at least 30 April 2020. We will be developing other means of getting information out and your feedback in. We are very aware of the possible implications of spreading the virus among people who work closely with vulnerable populations.

Any paid events will be refunded in full after Wendy returns from leave.



## Useful Links:

NESST Webpage – Upcoming Training and other news.

<https://www.nesst.org.au/>

National Disability Services.

<https://www.nesst.org.au/>

Carers NSW Australia

<http://www.carersnsw.org.au/>

Aged & Community Services Australia

<https://www.acsa.asn.au/>

NSW Rural Fire Service

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/>

Live Traffic NSW

<https://www.livetraffic.com/desktop.html>



## Contents

Upcoming Training.....	1
Useful Links: .....	2
ACSA Special Member Update.....	5
Community Care Review.....	6
Latest News.....	7
Events.....	8
Fact Sheet Cash Flow Assistance for Business .....	9
ACSA Weekly Issue No.158   26 March 2020 .....	9
All in this together.....	9
ACSA COVID-19 Alerts.....	10
Restrictions to visiting residential aged care facilities .....	10
Influenza vaccines for aged care staff.....	11
ACSA COVID-19 website updates.....	11
Dementia help sheets to navigate coronavirus .....	12
Senator Colbeck letter to aged care workers .....	13
Business Australia COVID-19 resource and employer toolkit.....	15
Support from ACSA Partners to assist you through COVID-19.....	16
Retirement Living and the COVID-19 pandemic: 10 legal tips for retirement living operators from Russell Kennedy Lawyers .....	16
Zenitas Mobile Healthcare .....	17
COVID-19 and your business: Hall & Willcox Webinar Series.....	18
Royal Commission suspends hearings and extends submission deadline.....	18
Humans of Aged Care: Maria Niepce.....	19
☕ FREE COFFEE!!!! For all healthcare workers ☕.....	19
Keep the music going: Free Melbourne Symphony Orchestra performances.....	20
ACSA Media Alerts .....	20
Join ACSA's social community.....	20
We want to share your stories.....	20
ACSA Events, Training & Development.....	21



ACSA Publications, Reports & Resources.....	22
Department of Health:.....	22
Department of Health daily COVID-19 updates: 'Protecting Older Australians' .....	23
ACSA Political Alerts.....	23
Australian Government text message regarding coronavirus prevention steps .....	23
ACSA Member Update   30 March 2020 .....	25
COVID-19 Information and Updates .....	26
Key points from National Cabinet Meeting, Sunday 29 March .....	26
Aged care activities pause due to COVID-19 .....	27
Support to keep people active and healthy as restrictions continue .....	28
COVID-19 Fact Sheet for Retirement Villages .....	29
COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers.....	29
Whole of population telehealth for patients, general practice, primary care and medical specialists .....	29
Department of Health Daily COVID-19 Newsletter.....	30
ACSA Member Update   30 March 2020 .....	31
COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers: clarification on influenza vaccine requirements	31
COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers .....	32
ACSA Member Update   31 March 2020 .....	33
COVID-19 Information and Updates .....	33
Key points from National Cabinet Meeting, Monday 30 March.....	33
Aged care temporary subsidy increases .....	35
JobKeeper payment - information for employers and employees.....	35
Department of Health Daily COVID-19 Newsletter.....	36
Australian Federation of Employers & Industries.....	37
The Department of Health CHSP Meals Providers.....	39
CHSP Meals Providers .....	39



## ACSA Special Member Update

---

# **ACSA** Special Member Update

Aged & Community Services Australia

Dear ACSA Member,

For the first time in more than a century, Queensland will restrict access at its border from midnight Wednesday, 25 March 2020.

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said it was essential to slow the spread of coronavirus on the advice of the Chief Health Officer Dr Young.

However, there has been clarification on who is being targeted by the border closures as follows:

“They **are not directed at our border communities** who cross to shop or work, attend medical appointments and return to their homes.

“**They are to stop holidaymakers** leaving southern states and risking the spread of this virus through Queensland.”

Measures to take effect on Wednesday include:

Border road closures and police checks on vehicles on major highways

Advice to aircraft passengers at departure point that travellers to Queensland will be required to self-isolate for 14 days

Travellers arriving at Queensland airports to be met by police and other officers

Termination of rail services

Exemptions include:

- **Those travelling to and from work**
- **Compassionate grounds**
- **Medical treatment**
- **Emergency workers**
- Emergency vehicles
- Court orders including family court
- Freight



Anyone travelling to Queensland, not usually resident in Queensland, for any other reason will have to agree to self-isolate for 14 days sick or not.

A permit system is hurriedly being planned to allow people exempted from Wednesday's lockdown of Queensland to regularly cross the border if needed.

Queensland police confirmed on Tuesday that RBT-like checkpoints will be set-up along the Queensland border from midnight to enforce the lockdown being introduced in a bid to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

Tens of thousands of people cross the border every day in their daily commute to work, particularly between the Gold Coast and northern NSW, and the lockdown is set to severely disrupt already desperate businesses.

ACSA made representations to both the Queensland and NSW Government, concerned to highlight that these measures could impact on informal carers who cross the border to care for elderly parents, far North Coast NSW residents who rely on entering QLD daily to access Gold Coast medical services for palliative care services (chemo, radiotherapy), doctors' appointments, specialist appointments as well as essential services staff in aged care and direct care staff. Further information will be provided as soon as it becomes available.

## Community Care Review

Please add us to your safe sender list and set images to always display.

Having trouble reading this email, [click here](#) | [Send this email to a friend](#)



**William Angliss Institute**  
**STUDY CERTIFICATE III IN CATERING OPERATIONS.**  
**WITH AN AGED CARE FOCUS.**  
*Apply now. Start July 2020* RTD No. 3065 CRICOS Provider No. 01505M HEP 9534

## Latest News



### [Home, community providers to benefit from support package](#)

New measures against COVID-19 have been unveiled for the aged care sector including a \$235 million staff retention bonus for residential and home care providers.



**COVID-19 supports announced for NDIS providers**

NDIS providers will get assistance to retain workers as part of a suite of supports announced by the federal government in response to COVID-19.

**CHSP providers ordered to suspend group activities**

CHSP providers have been given special flexibility provisions allowing them to transfer funds from now-banned group and social activities to essential services like meal delivery.



**New web series tackles life after death of a loved one**

Stig Wemyss worked with Benetas to produce a humorous webseries called My Wife is Dead and I'm Starving.

Presented by Australian Ageing Agenda Advertisers

**Events**



**Silver Rainbow: LGBTI Aged Care Awareness In-Person Training**

**Jul 30 - Jun 1**

The Silver Rainbow LGBTI Aged Care Awareness training is a national initiative that is being presented at a venue near you.



**Medication Management in Home Care Webinar**

**Mar 31 - Mar 30**

Are you concerned about Medication Management in your Home Care Service? You cannot afford to miss this event.

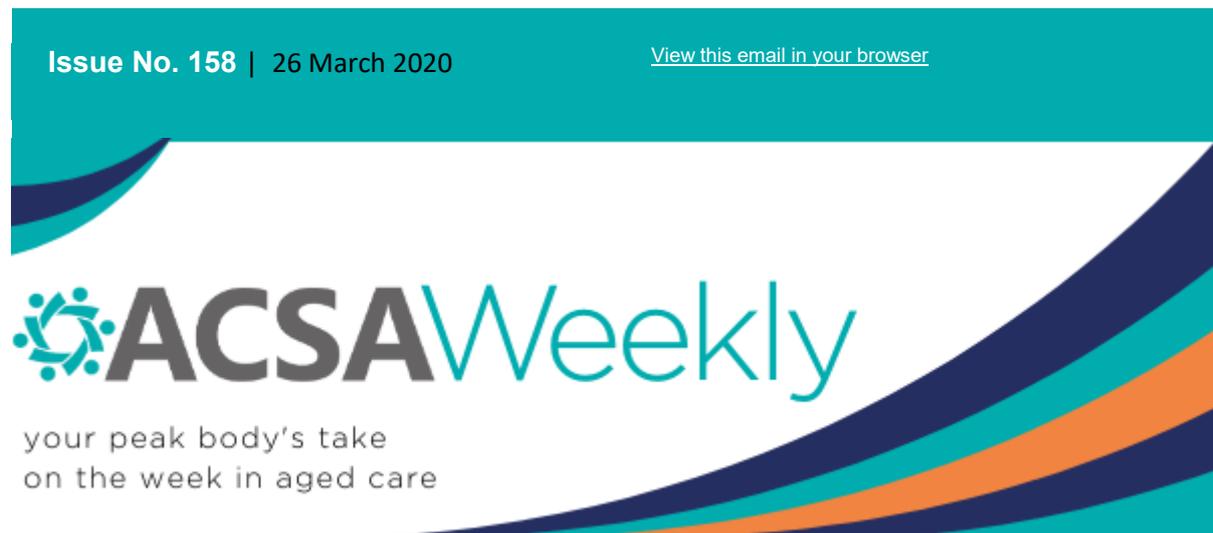


## Fact Sheet Cash Flow Assistance for Business



Fact\_sheet-Cash\_flow  
w\_assistance\_for\_bu

## ACSA Weekly Issue No.158 | 26 March 2020



### All in this together

Governments are ramping up responses to COVID-19 and as a community we are coming to terms with restrictions and what compliance really means.

This week has seen further activity on visitor restrictions to aged care with many providers going into lockdown to protect residents.

Implementation of the new influenza vaccination requirements has been a focus of queries this week. Government will provide some guidance on any exemptions allowed but they will be limited and focussed on where there are legitimate medical reasons for not being vaccinated. If you are trying to access locally and confronting any issues – either being told it is unavailable or aged care is not a priority, please let us know the specific details. Government has said it will follow through to assist as they are very clear that aged care workforce is a priority for access.



Earlier this week ACSA hosted a webinar where Ross Low, CEO BaptistCare NSW & ACT shared, with great courage and grace, the lessons they had learnt as the first aged care facility in Australia to have to deal with an outbreak. Ross drew particular attention to managing and educating the workforce, the importance of communication, PPE use and requirements and the impacts quarantine is having on individuals. The webinar also explored crisis management and communications during such times with a [presentation](#) by Peter Stahel, Associate Director at Essential Media. You can [view the ACSA webinar here](#).

There was good news too with one resident who had tested positive to the virus, having recovered and returned to the home. It's important at this time to focus on the good things happening as well. The catch cry for the COVID-19 pandemic is that we are all in this together. And that's true. As a community and a sector we need to support each other and work together. That's what we are here for so if you need support or have queries or concerns please don't hesitate to contact ACSA's Member Support line on 1300 877 855 or email [memberadvice@acsa.asn.au](mailto:memberadvice@acsa.asn.au).

Take care and stay well.

Regards,  
Pat Sparrow  
ACSA CEO

## ACSA COVID-19 Alerts



### **Restrictions to visiting residential aged care facilities**

We know a number of States & Territories have published their declarations on restrictions to visiting residential aged care facilities. In some cases these restrictions go beyond what was announced by the Prime Minister last week. ACSA has convened and is working with consumer representatives, LASA and the Guild to provide some more guidance for members. The current situation is:



The guidance provided by the Prime Minister on visitation restrictions is based on the minimum requirements advised to the National Cabinet by the AHPPC. This guidance is to be observed by all residential aged care facilities;

In some circumstances, residential aged care facilities may introduce further measures or restrictions in response to their individual local risk factors. However, the rationale for additional measures will need to be clearly articulated and implementation needs to be done in consultation with residents and families; and

Where State or Territory Governments have provided additional direction to residential aged care providers about additional COVID19 protection measures (including further reductions to visitation) they will need to be considered by the facility, implemented as required, and included as part of the rationale for escalation of additional protection measures.

### **Influenza vaccines for aged care staff**

All states and territories have released directions under relevant state/territory legislation which set out specific requirements with regard to entry into and visitors to residential aged care facilities. The directions place specific obligations on individuals and residential aged care providers in relation to persons entering a residential aged care facility, including in relation to vaccinations against influenza. The directions are published on each state/territory government websites at the following links:

[New South Wales](#)

[Western Australia](#)

[Victoria](#)

[Tasmania](#)

[Queensland](#)

[Australian Capital Territory](#)

[South Australia](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

### **ACSA COVID-19 website updates**

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, so too does ACSA's website and resources. Updated daily, the ACSA website groups resources, information and links from key authorities for members to access in one place. Retirement village operators can now find specific resources on our new [Retirement Village](#) information page, with dedicated home care and residential care pages also coming soon. [Visit the ACSA COVID-19 website](#)





## **Dementia help sheets to navigate coronavirus**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dementia Australia has released four Help Sheets outlining tips for people living with dementia, carers, families and friends of people living with dementia, residential care providers and home care providers. "There is confusion in the community and new rules announced daily to keep pace with this rapidly evolving situation," said Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe. "For people living dementia this can create even more uncertainty. We have developed these Help Sheets to provide clarity on what we can do to achieve the best possible outcomes for people living with dementia." [Read more](#)

## **Personal Protective Equipment: Update to PPE request process**

As stated in the Department of Health's daily update on Monday 23 March, there has been an update to the PPE request process. Aged care providers that require Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must now email [agedcarecovidppe@health.gov.au](mailto:agedcarecovidppe@health.gov.au) for all requests. Emails previously sent to the National Stockpile address don't need to be resent, and have been captured in this new, dedicated aged care process. All requests will be triaged by the Department of Health with priority given to facilities, programs and carers where there has been a confirmed case of COVID-19. [Read more](#)

## **Connection and support through coronavirus outbreak**

Beyond Blue has developed a suite of online resources about coping with COVID-19 in response to rising community concern about the virus. Contacts about COVID-19 to the Beyond Blue Support Service are increasing and Beyond Blue's online discussion forum about the virus is attracting unprecedented interest. Beyond Blue is encouraging a calm, practical approach to managing the emotional impact of the virus. The new '[Looking after your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak](#)' web page includes tips about coping with self-isolation, how to talk to children about the outbreak, advice for health care workers, and information about support-seeking. [Read more](#)



The Department of Health has released a range of [videos](#) designed to inform the public and to help "Stop the Spread" of COVID-19.

### **Senator Colbeck letter to aged care workers**

The efforts of our Aged Care workers are critical in slowing the spread of COVID-19 and it is important that their contribution is recognised. This letter addresses the Minister's recent announcement about extra financial support for workers and providers. ACSA has asked the Department of Health for details of the retention bonus measures including when and how will the payments be made to providers, in what circumstances will the payments be made, whether it applies to casual workers and for clarification around 'a direct care worker'. We will advise members when we have more information. [Read more](#)

### **National Cabinet update, Wednesday 25 March**

To further protect Australia, National Cabinet agreed to an Australian Health Principal Protection Committee (AHPPC) recommendation to expand the current coronavirus testing criteria to include testing people with fever or acute respiratory infection in:

All health workers;

All aged/residential care workers;

Geographically localised areas where there is elevated risk of community transmission as defined by the local public health unit; and



Where no community transmission is occurring, high risk settings where there are two or more plausibly-linked cases, for example:

Aged and residential care

Rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Detention centres/correctional facilities

Boarding schools

Military bases (including Navy ships) that have live-in accommodation.

National Cabinet endorsed the recommendation for states and territories to suspend all non-urgent elective surgery. National Cabinet agreed to extend the deadline for the suspension of semi-urgent Category 2 and 3 elective surgeries at private hospitals to 11.59pm on 1 April 2020. National Cabinet also agreed to implement nationally consistent public health directions, at the state and territory level, on self-quarantine for individuals diagnosed with coronavirus. [Read more](#)

### **Fact Sheet for senior Australians to stop the spread and save lives**

A comprehensive fact sheet is now available for senior Australians as the campaign to stop the spread of COVID-19 continues. Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians Richard Colbeck said the online guide was a one-stop-shop at a time when clear advice has never been more important. "Senior Australians and their loved ones must have access to updated information to ensure they can protect themselves, whether they're living at home, with family or in care," Minister Colbeck said. [Read more](#)

### **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission**

On Monday 23 March, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner sent a message to approved providers of residential aged care services about visitor restrictions. On Thursday 19 March, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission issued 'Assessment contact on preparing for COVID-19' advising that the Commission is currently contacting all approved providers of residential aged care services by telephone to monitor and support them in their preparation for a COVID-19 outbreak. Commission information and resources on COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

### SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19, FLU AND COLD

	 DRY COUGH	 FEVER	 RUNNY NOSE	 SORE THROAT	 BREATH-LESSNESS	 HEADACHE	 BODY ACHES	 SNEEZE	 FATIGUE	 DIARRHOEA
COVID-19										
FLU										
COLD										

 FREQUENTLY  
  SOMETIMES  
  LITTLE  
  RARE  
  NOT

@SIOUXSIEW @XTOTL thespinoff.co.nz

SOURCE: WHO, CDC CC-BY-SA

### Business Australia COVID-19 resource and employer toolkit

Business Australia is on hand with a range of resources to help employers and businesses with practical free advice and information to help them navigate the COVID-19 crisis. They have made publicly available some excellent resources and an employer toolkit which may help you in navigating challenges faced as this pandemic evolves. [Read more](#)

### Evidence of Employment within an essential service

ACSA would like to thank Wintringham for sharing their letter to be used as proforma for other members and employers of aged care employees. Please click here for the proforma letter for you to use to issue to your employees to keep with them should they need it to confirm their role and employment in the aged care sector. [Download proforma](#)

### Government working with industry on hand sanitiser production

The Federal Government is working closely with Australian industry to further ramp up local manufacturing of hand sanitiser amid the COVID-19 outbreak. Minister for Industry, Science and Technology Karen Andrews said manufacturers had already significantly increased their output and more was being done to grow that even further. "I want to stress to Australians that we have the capacity and the raw ingredients here to continue to meet the increased demand," Minister Andrews said. "Industry, with the help of government, is stepping up to meet the challenges being thrown at us by this virus." [Read more](#)



## State-based updates

For all state-based news, contacts and updates relating to COVID-19, please refer to your relevant State News below or visit ACSA's Coronavirus > State and Territory Updates webpage, which can be [viewed here](#).

*If you have any questions or concerns regarding COVID-19, please visit the Department of Health [website](#) to access information including [resources for health professionals](#), or contact the Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.*



## Support from ACSA Partners to assist you through COVID-19

We have had a great many offers of support from ACSA's [Corporate Partners](#) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and are pleased to share the following information and offers with our members, that may assist with answering some of your questions or easing some of the strain you are currently facing. These offers are still coming through and we will have more available to you next week.

## Retirement Living and the COVID-19 pandemic: 10 legal tips for retirement living operators from Russell Kennedy Lawyers

Retirement living operators who fail to adequately manage the risk of COVID-19 pandemic may face legal and/or regulatory action, and risk long-term reputational damage in a highly-charged socio-political climate. As retirement villages are governed by their respective State or Territory retirement village legislation, operators should be aware that Federal Government directions relating to aged care do not apply to villages. Rather, operators will need to look to Federal Government directions that apply to the general public and any relevant State or Territory government directions. [Read more](#)



## Free Access to Relatives Gateway from Person Centred Software

Official partner of ACSA, Person Centred Software is providing free access to their Relatives Gateway for a period of three months to assist homes who are most in need of this resource. The Relatives Gateway creates an opportunity for homes to streamline their communication to relatives in an effort to ease the strain placed on registered and managerial staff in fielding calls as well as providing relief to families who no longer have physical access to their loved ones. For more information please contact [acsaooffer@personcentredsoftware.com.au](mailto:acsaooffer@personcentredsoftware.com.au). [Read more](#)

## First State Super Q&A

The image shows a YouTube video player interface. At the top left is the 'first state super' logo. The video title is 'COVID-19 Crisis: First State Super Q&A Impa...'. To the right of the title are icons for 'Watch later' and 'Share'. Below the title, the text 'Part 1' is displayed in a pink font. In the center is a large play button icon. Below the play button, the text 'Impact of market volatility' is written in a large, bold, purple font.

## Zenitas Mobile Healthcare

The Zenitas Mobile Healthcare team is providing facilities with dedicated staff members for delivery of essential services to limit the number of people coming into residential aged care sites. During this time, allied health services such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy are crucial so that our clients stay well and healthy. Our allied health services are especially important for complex-needs clients – we can assist to preserve skin integrity, recovery and prevention of falls, and assist with bridging the gap with the lack of access to GPs. We are also offering telehealth services; reinforcing standard transmission precautions (including hand hygiene) with our teams; ensuring our staff have personal protective equipment; and rolling out targeted guidance and training on infection control for our staff, to help support them stay infection free. [Read more](#)



## COVID-19 and your business: Hall & Willcox Webinar Series

ACSA Partner Hall & Willcox are running a series of Webinars relating to COVID-19 and your business. The first webinar focused on tax strategies, including the Government's economic response phase one and two, and administrative tax measures for those experiencing financial difficulty as a result of COVID-19. Webinar 2 is set to discuss an overview of current corporate governance risks; how privacy laws may impact businesses during the pandemic, including managing employee and customer health information; and a quick update on any employment law changes over the week. [View the webinars](#)

## What does COVID-19 mean for your Super?

HESTA CEO Debby Blakey discusses how the fund is responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19), the current market volatility, and the approach they're taking to ensure they continue to assist their members with their super. HESTA recognises the incredible work their members are doing on the frontline to support the community during these challenging times. [Read more](#)



[New South Wales & Australian Capital Territory](#)  
[Queensland](#)  
[South Australia & Northern Territory](#)  
[Tasmania](#)  
[Victoria](#)  
[Western Australia](#)

## Royal Commission suspends hearings and extends submission deadline

The Royal Commission has announced a decision to suspend all hearings and workshops as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. This suspension will be subject to ongoing review, but will affect all workshops and hearings until at least the end of May. The Commission has

also extended the deadline for public submissions from 30 April to 30 June. The Commissioners said they took the decision in light of the clear need for aged care providers to focus their efforts on responding to the pandemic.

“Meaningful engagement with the sector is paramount to the work of the Royal Commission’s inquiry into aged care quality and safety, which is why we have decided to suspend all hearings and workshops. We must allow service providers and Government to focus fully on their response to the pandemic,” the Commissioners said. [Read more](#)

## Humans of Aged Care: Maria Niepce

Maria Niepce works as an Aged Care Support Worker at YourCare Home Care Services, Tasmania. "I support my elderly clients to live as fulfilled and independently as possible in their own home, where they feel connected, safe and where they can live with their pets, partner or family for as long as they want to," said Maria. "I feel fulfilled and lucky to have found my role in my life, to provide and care for our most vulnerable people - our elderly - and I believe they deserve our utmost respect, care and devotion." [Read more](#)



*"Getting old does not mean that these people do not have any goals, hopes or passion left. My role is to listen to them, to hear them, to see them, to respect them and to make life just a little bit easier for them. They earned it!" - Maria Niepce*

## ☕ FREE COFFEE!!!! For all healthcare workers ☕

McDonalds are offering all health care workers a little something as thanks in return for the important work that you do for our communities. You can get a free McCafe hot drink or medium soft drink from any McDonalds - simply show your healthcare ID or be in uniform when you order. The offer is available until 17 May. [Learn more](#)



## Keep the music going: Free Melbourne Symphony Orchestra performances

Throughout the ban on public events, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra will continue to perform for you. "We will keep the music going. Our mission is to share great music, even if you cannot join us in the concert hall." If your residents are looking for new activities to try, join the MSO YouTube channel to enjoy free MSO performances each Thursday evening at 7:30pm (AEDT). [Learn more](#)

## ACSA Media Alerts



22 March: [Funding boost welcome, but peaks call for much more](#), Australian Ageing Agenda

### Join ACSA's social community

Are you following ACSA on our social media channels?



Stay up to date in real time on the latest news, trends, media and talking points in aged care. Join the conversation, share thought-provoking content with your peers and be a part of the ACSA social network on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

### We want to share your stories

ACSA's members are providing innovative and quality services to thousands of older Australians every day – and we'd like to share some of these stories with others through ACSA Weekly.



Please send us any of your stories that feature your services at their best, and make sure our email [ascsacommunications@acsa.asn.au](mailto:ascsacommunications@acsa.asn.au) is on your distribution list for any media releases or updates so we can share the news with the rest of ACSA's membership.

## ACSA Events, Training & Development



ACSA is working hard on a program of online events to keep you informed and also connected with other providers over coming months, while face-to-face activities are necessarily on hold due to COVID-19.

This week we presented our webinar 'Lessons from BaptistCare + Crisis Media Management' with Ross Low, CEO of BaptistCare, talking about how his organisation handled the recent COVID-19 outbreak at their Dorothy Henderson Lodge facility, and Peter Stahel from Essential Media taking participants through crisis media planning.

You can [click here](#) to watch the webinar, and/or download Essential Media's Crisis Media Management presentation [here](#).

Further webinars and updates on upcoming events will be communicated shortly.

## On-Demand Training

In light of the current measures being put in place due to the Covid-19 virus, it is critical for the Aged Care Services workforce to have the required skills and knowledge in order to provide quality services to older Australians. Protecting older Australians in care and the staff who look after them is critical. ACSA is continuing to facilitate On-Demand Training and is working with organisations to identify the best modes of delivery in our current environment.

*What are you doing well & what do you need to be doing better?  
Do you need an online induction program developed?*

What are your Training needs and how can we support your organisation?

*If you require any training for your organisation please contact our Training and Professional Development team:*

P: 0408 193 444 | E: [training@acsa.asn.au](mailto:training@acsa.asn.au)  
[agedservicesworkforce.com.au/enquiries](https://agedservicesworkforce.com.au/enquiries)



 ACSA  
Aged & Community Services Australia

## ACSA Publications, Reports & Resources

### ACSA Publications, reports & resources

relevant resources, grants and research in the aged care sector

#### Department of Health:

Information for the Aged Care Sector Newsletter, Issue 2020/05. [Read more](#)

Indexation rates for Residential Aged Care and Home Care Packages and changes to the Maximum Permissible Interest Rate (MPIR). [Read more](#)

Arrangements for CHSP providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Read more](#)



## Department of Health daily COVID-19 updates: 'Protecting Older Australians'

The Department of Health last week announced it's daily COVID-19 newsletter, Protecting Older Australians. This is now being widely distributed to those on the Department's mailing list. If you are not currently receiving updates from the Department of Health, ACSA strongly recommends you [subscribe now](#).

[Thursday 26 March update, 'Protecting Older Australians'](#)

[Wednesday 25 March update, 'Protecting Older Australians'](#)

[Tuesday 24 March update, 'Protecting Older Australians'](#)

[Monday 23 March update, 'Protecting Older Australians'](#)

[Friday 20 March update, 'Protecting Older Australians'](#)

The Protecting Older Australians updates are also accessible on our [COVID-19 website](#), and you can access these resources online [here](#).

## ACSA Political Alerts



### Australian Government text message regarding coronavirus prevention steps

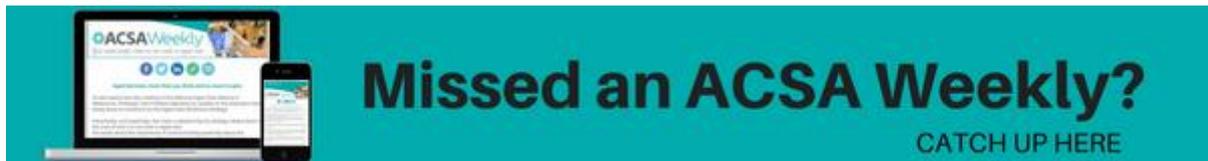
Commencing Wednesday 25 March, every Australian mobile phone will be sent a text message from the Australian Government with important steps each person can take to protect their own health, the health of their families and the health of the whole community from the coronavirus. The text message will read: Coronavirus Aus Gov msg: To stop the spread, stay 1.5m from others, follow rules on social gatherings, wash hands, stay home if sick. [aus.gov.au](http://aus.gov.au). [Read more](#)

### Announcement of the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission

Neville Power, the newly appointed Chair of the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission, has today pledged his commitment to helping businesses, jobs and livelihoods through the



COVID19 pandemic. "The role of the Commission is to minimise and mitigate the impact of the coronavirus on our businesses, our communities and our people," Mr Power said. [Read more](#)



### NATIONAL PARTNERS



### INDUSTRY PARTNERS



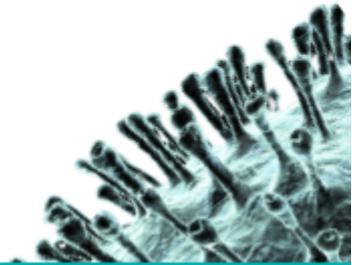


[View this email in your browser](#)

**ACSA Member Update | 30 March 2020**

 **ACSA** Member Update  
Aged & Community Services Australia

# Coronavirus (COVID-19)





## COVID-19 Information and Updates

This Member Update provides information on the following:

[National Cabinet Meeting, Sunday 29 March;](#)

[Aged care activities paused due to COVID-19;](#)

[Support to keep people active and healthy as COVID-19 restrictions continue;](#)

[COVID-19 fact sheet for Retirement Villages;](#)

[COVID-19 fact sheet for In-Home Care workers;](#)

[Whole of population telehealth for patients, general practice, primary care & medical specialists;](#) and

['Protecting Older Australians' daily COVID-19 newsletter;](#) recent editions.

### Key points from National Cabinet Meeting, Sunday 29 March

We will be living with this virus for at least six months, so social distancing measures to slow this virus down must be sustainable for at least that long to protect Australian lives and help Australia to keep functioning.

The rate of increase in the virus curve is slowing, but overall numbers are still increasing. While the majority of cases in Australia are connected to travellers returning to Australia from overseas, there has been some sustained community transmission in areas of Sydney and Melbourne.

National Cabinet noted the extensive work underway to procure more masks, ventilators, gloves, gowns and hand sanitiser from both international suppliers and domestic manufacturers. National Cabinet further noted that the Commonwealth had announced a package of \$1.1 billion to boost mental health services, domestic violence support, Medicare assistance for people at home and emergency food relief.

National Cabinet agreed to limit both indoor and outdoor gatherings to two persons only. Exceptions to this limit include:

- People of the same household going out together;
- Funerals - a maximum of 10 people;
- Wedding - a maximum of 5 people;
- Family units.



National Cabinet's strong guidance to all Australians is to stay home unless for:

- Shopping for what you need, i.e. food and necessary supplies;
- Medical or health care needs, including compassionate requirements;
- Exercise in compliance with the public gathering requirements;
- Work and study if you can't work or learn remotely.

National Cabinet agreed that playgrounds, skate parks and outside gyms in public places will be closed. Bootcamps will be reduced to two persons, including the trainer.

These measures will be in place from midnight tonight (Monday 30 March).

National Cabinet's strong advice is for self-isolation at home to the maximum extent practicable for Australians:

- Over 70 years of age;
- Over 60 years of age who have existing health conditions or comorbidities;
- Indigenous Australians over the age of 50 who have existing health conditions or comorbidities.

These groups should limit contact with others as much as possible when they travel outside.

As part of its work on helping businesses hibernate, National Cabinet agreed that short-term intervention is needed for commercial tenancies. Work on this has begun, but there is more to do, including for residential tenancies.

National Cabinet agreed to a moratorium on evictions over the next six months for commercial and residential tenancies in financial distress who are unable to meet their commitments due to the impact of coronavirus.

[Click here to read the National Cabinet Statement in full](#)

## **Aged care activities pause due to COVID-19**



With considerable resources from the Aged Care sector and Government now required in the campaign to keep senior Australians safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, several long term measures will be put on hold for at least six months, the:

Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) assessment trial;

2020 Aged Care Approval Round; and

Implementation of the home care payment alignment project **will all be postponed** as the Morrison Government deals with an unprecedented health emergency.

[Click here to read more about aged care activities on hold](#)

### **Support to keep people active and healthy as restrictions continue**

Senior Australians and young people will benefit from a \$1.1 billion funding package aimed at ensuring they stay healthy and connected during the campaign to stop the spread of COVID19. The additional boost announced by Prime Minister Scott Morrison will target mental health services, domestic violence support, Medicare assistance for people at home and emergency service relief.

This includes \$10 million for a Community Visitors Scheme to help ensure Senior Australians are not socially isolated as a result of visitor restrictions.

The funding will support extra staff to train volunteer visitors, who will connect with older people in aged care both online and by phone, and assist seniors to keep in touch with the community and loved ones.

More broadly, a \$669 million injection will be used to expand Medicare-subsidised telehealth services for all Australians.

This will give people of all ages access to support in their own home using phone or video conferencing features like FaceTime to connect with GP services and a wide range of services including support to patients in aged care facilities, children with autism, after-hours consultations and nurse practitioners.



[Click here to read more about additional support measures](#)

### COVID-19 Fact Sheet for Retirement Villages

The Department of Health has published a fact sheet for retirement villages which includes information and FAQs for operators and residents. You can access this fact sheet via ACSA's new [COVID-19 Retirement Villages webpage](#) or by clicking the link below.

[Download the COVID-19 Fact Sheet for Retirement Villages](#)

### COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers

The Department of Health has published a COVID-19 fact sheet for in-home care workers which includes information and FAQs. You can access this fact sheet via ACSA's [COVID-19 website](#) or by clicking the link below.

Please note, ACSA has contacted the Department of Health to clarify requirements and arrangements regarding influenza vaccinations for in-home care workers. We will advise members when more information is available.

[Download the COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers](#)

## **Whole of population telehealth for patients, general practice, primary care and medical specialists**

To provide continued access to essential primary health services during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government is expanding Medicare-subsidised telehealth services for all Australians and providing extra incentives to general practitioners and other health practitioners.



Services will include GP services and some consultation services provided by other medical specialists, nurse practitioners, mental health treatment, chronic disease management, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health assessments, services to people with eating disorders, pregnancy support counselling, services to patients in aged care facilities, children with autism, and after-hours consultations.

These changes represent the fourth stage of a series of primary care measures and will commence from 8am Monday 30 March.

The Government will double the bulk billing incentive for GPs both for face-to-face and telehealth services during the course of the COVID-19 response.

Further changes will be introduced during the week that will allow GPs and other providers to apply their usual billing practices to telehealth consultations, while concessional and vulnerable patients will continue to receive services at no cost.

In addition, the Government will establish an incentive payment to ensure practices stay open to provide face-to-face services where they are essential for patients with conditions that can't be treated through telehealth.

[Click here to read more on Medicare-subsidised telehealth services](#)

## Department of Health Daily COVID-19 Newsletter

The Department of Health last week announced its daily COVID-19 newsletter, Protecting Older Australians. As of last week, these updates will be sent daily to those subscribed to the Department's mailing list. If you are not already registered to receive aged care updates from the Department of Health, ACSA strongly recommends you [subscribe now](#).

All Protecting Older Australians updates are also accessible on ACSA's [COVID-19 website](#), and you can access these resources online [here](#).

[Friday's update](#) details COVID-19 testing for aged care workers and clarifications around entry restrictions to aged care facilities for those are not vaccinated against influenza. This includes clarification around state and territory directions.



[Saturday's update](#) provides information on telehealth assessments as well as three new eLearning modules developed specifically for aged care workers:

Module 2: Families and Visitors - Residential care facilities and in home care

Module 3: COVID-19 and Aged Care

Module 4: Outbreak Management Procedures

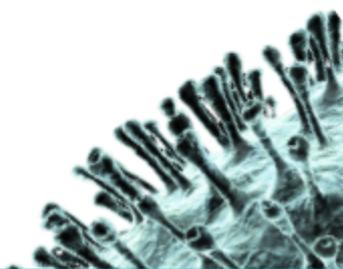
[Click here to access all Protecting Older Australians eNewsletters](#)

[View this email in your browser](#)

**ACSA Member Update | 30 March 2020**

 **ACSA** Member Update  
Aged & Community Services Australia

**Coronavirus  
(COVID-19)**



### **COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers: clarification on influenza vaccine requirements**

Further to the Member Update sent earlier today, ACSA has received a response from the Department of Health regarding our queries around the COVID-19 Fact Sheets for In-Home Care Workers.

ACSA contacted the Department of Health to clarify requirements and arrangements regarding influenza vaccinations for in-home care workers. The following response has been provided:



*The Department would like to clarify that the information on the health.gov.au website in relation to the requirement for in-home aged care workers to receive the influenza vaccination by 1 May 2020 is not correct. Thank you for bringing it to our attention. We are working to have this information updated as a priority and would like to sincerely apologise for any confusion that this has caused.*

***While it is not compulsory for in-home aged care workers to receive the influenza vaccination to continue working, we would strongly encourage all staff and volunteers to receive the influenza vaccination this year if available to them. As the COVID-19 outbreak evolves, it is particularly important for all staff and volunteers to be vaccinated against influenza. Ensuring staff and volunteers are vaccinated against influenza will not only provide protection for staff but also an additional layer of protection for consumers, who are more vulnerable to serious complications from influenza.***

Please note the links you have been provided to the fact sheet for in-home care workers is the correct link, however the fact sheet has not yet been updated. We are now waiting on the Department to amend the source document, which will be done in coming days.

## **COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers**

The Department of Health has published a COVID-19 fact sheet for in-home care workers which includes information and FAQs. You can access this fact sheet via ACSA's [COVID-19 website](#) or by clicking the link below.

Please note, ACSA has contacted the Department of Health to clarify requirements and arrangements regarding influenza vaccinations for in-home care workers. We will advise members when more information is available.

**[Download the COVID-19 Fact Sheet for In-Home Care Workers](#)**



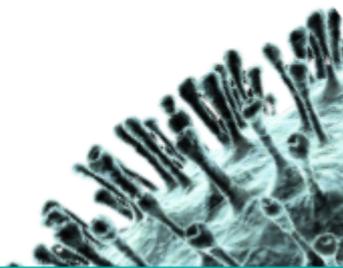
[View this email in your browser](#)

**ACSA Member Update | 31 March 2020**

# **ACSA Member Update**

Aged & Community Services Australia

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19)**



### **COVID-19 Information and Updates**

This Member Update provides information on the following:

[Key points from National Cabinet meeting, 30 March 2020](#);

[Aged care temporary subsidy increases](#);

[JobKeeper payment information for employers and employees](#); and

['Protecting Older Australians' daily COVID-19 newsletter](#): recent editions.

### **Key points from National Cabinet Meeting, Monday 30 March**

Australian governments met yesterday as the National Cabinet to take further action to slow the spread of coronavirus to save lives, and to save livelihoods.

We will be living with this virus for at least six months, so social distancing measures to slow the spread of this virus must be sustainable for at least that long to protect Australian lives.

The Chief Medical Officer advice is that following the scaled up social distancing measures over the last week, Australia has now achieved significant behavioural change and that the message to “stay at home unless doing limited essential activities” is being heeded.

It is clear the epidemiology curve is beginning to flatten. But it is too early to determine



whether such movements will be significant or sustained.

National Cabinet endorsed the AHPPC advice on vulnerable people in the workplace, specifically that the following people are, or are likely to be, at higher risk of serious illness if they are infected with the virus:

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older** with one or more chronic medical conditions;

**People 65 years and older with chronic medical conditions.** Conditions included in the definition of 'chronic medical conditions' will be refined as more evidence emerges;

**People 70 years and older;** and

People with **compromised immune systems** (see Department of Health [website](#)).

National Cabinet noted that the new AHPPC advice on the higher risk categories for people 65 years and older with chronic conditions had changed based on more up to date medical advice.

In addition, National Cabinet endorsed the AHPPC advice that:

**Where vulnerable workers undertake essential work, a risk assessment must be undertaken -**

Risk needs to be assessed and mitigated with consideration of the characteristics of the worker, the workplace and the work.

This includes **ensuring vulnerable people are redeployed** to noncustomer based roles where possible.

**Where risk cannot be appropriately mitigated, employers and employees should consider alternate arrangements to accommodate a workplace absence.**

**Special provisions apply to essential workers** who are at higher risk of serious illness and, where the risk cannot be sufficiently mitigated, **should not work in high risk settings.**

**Excluding healthcare settings where appropriate PPE** and precautions are adhered to, the AHPPC considers that, given the transmission characteristics of the virus, the following settings are **at higher risk of outbreaks of coronavirus - correctional and detention facilities and group residential settings.**

The AHPPC advice is that there is limited evidence at this time regarding the risk in pregnant women.



National Cabinet agreed to meet again on Friday 3 April 2020.

[Click here to read the National Cabinet Statement in full](#)

### **Aged care temporary subsidy increases**

The Government has **legislated temporary subsidy increases to give effect to measures announced on 20 March 2020 by the Prime Minister of temporary increases in additional funding for both residential and home care providers.** The increased funding is to support continuity of the aged care workforce due to the impacts from COVID-19.

The additional funding will help ensure the viability of residential and home care providers. This support to maintain workforce continuity will be provided through temporary increases in aged care payments from 1 March 2020 to 31 August 2020 inclusive.

The **temporary increases in aged care funding** are:

Home care basic subsidy increased by 1.2 per cent (rounded);

Residential care basic subsidy increased by 1.2 per cent (rounded);

Homeless supplement in residential care increased by 30 per cent (rounded); and

Viability supplement in residential and home care increased by 30 per cent (rounded).

[Click here to read more about temporary subsidy increases](#)

### **JobKeeper payment - information for employers and employees**

The [JobKeeper Payment](#) is a temporary scheme open to businesses impacted by the Coronavirus. The JobKeeper Payment will also be available to the self-employed.

The Government will provide \$1,500 per fortnight per employee for up to 6 months.



Employers (including non-for-profits) will be eligible for the subsidy if:

Their business has a turnover of less than \$1 billion and their turnover will be reduced by more than 30 per cent relative to a comparable period a year ago (of at least a month); or

Their business has a turnover of \$1 billion or more and their turnover will be reduced by more than 50 per cent relative to a comparable period a year ago (of at least a month); and

The business is not subject to the Major Bank Levy.

**Employers must elect to participate in the scheme.** They will need to make an application to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and provide supporting information demonstrating a downturn in their business. In addition, employers must report the number of eligible employees employed by the business on a monthly basis.

The subsidy will start on 30 March 2020, with the first payments to be received by employers in the first week of May. Businesses will be able to register their interest in participating in the Payment from 30 March 2020 on the [ATO website](#).

[Click here to download the JobKeeper fact sheets](#)

## Department of Health Daily COVID-19 Newsletter

The Department of Health continues to produce its daily COVID-19 newsletter, Protecting Older Australians. As of last week, these updates will be sent daily to those subscribed to the Department's mailing list. If you are not already registered to receive aged care updates from the Department of Health, ACSA strongly recommends you [subscribe now](#).

All Protecting Older Australians updates are also accessible on ACSA's [COVID-19 website](#), and you can access these resources online [here](#).

[Today's update](#) details information regarding the Government's additional funding for aged care, along with streamlined processes to increase residential respite days.



[Click here to access all Protecting Older Australians eNewsletters](#)

## Australian Federation of Employers & Industries



**Tuesday, 31 March 2020**

### **Information for Members: Coronavirus update #7 - JobKeeper Program - Assistance for employers**

The JobKeeper Program is intended to provide wage subsidies to businesses and not for profit organisations that are significantly affected by the COVID-19 virus.

Full details can be viewed in All Member Circular No.: 45/2020 - [click here to view](#).

If you have any questions, or require further information, on the above circular, please don't hesitate to contact the AFEI Hotline on (02) 9264 2000.

If you are having difficulties accessing our website, please contact Member Services on (02) 9264 2000

---

Should you wish to change the email address we have used to send this information to you, please advise the details by replying to this email or contacting Member Services on (02) 9264 2000.



**Tuesday, 31 March 2020**

## **Information for Members: Coronavirus update #8 - Further restrictions on businesses and social distancing**

NSW Public Health Restrictions-New Order issued: **Restrictions on Gathering and Movement Order** which details further restrictions on businesses and social distancing.

Full details can be viewed in All Member Circular No.: 46/2020 - [click here to view](#).

If you have any questions, or require further information, on the above circular, please don't hesitate to contact the AFEI Hotline on (02) 9264 2000.

If you are having difficulties accessing our website, please contact Member Services on (02) 9264 2000

---

Should you wish to change the email address we have used to send this information to you, please advise the details by replying to this email or contacting Member Services on (02) 9264 2000.



## The Department of Health CHSP Meals Providers



The  
Department  
of Health

### CHSP Meals Providers

The Australian Government, through the Department of Health 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.

These funds are intended to assist you to replace volunteers with paid workers where needed; to increase your capacity to supply more meals for existing clients; and/or to support new clients.

The additional funds may also be directed towards partnerships with local commercial kitchens to increase your capacity, if your organisation is not able to do so itself.

You are encouraged to deliver as many meals as possible using these funds.

We ask you to please complete the survey at the link below (only **one** question), to specify the size of additional funds you are seeking.

We know that many of you are busy and may not get a chance to complete this survey. If you are unable to complete the survey you will automatically receive an offer of an additional 50 per cent of your scheduled funding between April and September.

LINK: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YJ9GJCR>

The survey will be open until close of business, **Thursday 2 April 2020**. Please use the link above. If it is not working you may email your response to [CHSPprogram@health.gov.au](mailto:CHSPprogram@health.gov.au) by completing the attached word copy.

Regards

Commonwealth Home Support Program

Department of Health



20200331 CHSP  
Meals Provider Surv



Dear Member Organization

As we approach the end of March, the COVID-19 virus continues to affect our organisations, our staff and those within our communities who rely on our services to maintain a sense of normality, relief and connection.

I want to inform you that as a valued member of Armidale Volunteer Referral Service, we remain available to assist you and your organization, when and where possible.

We stand ready to assist you, if you need to recruit additional volunteers to overcome those gaps left as people self-isolate. You may have altered your service models and be looking for additional volunteers to support those new strategies. Or, if you have decided to hibernate to a more certain time, Armidale Volunteer Referral Service is very keen to work alongside you and discuss those recovery strategies as you enact your recovery plans.

As you know Armidale Volunteer Referral Service supports community-based organisations and volunteers alike and we are very interested in learning more about your strategy to remain connected to those of your volunteers who are self-isolating. Perhaps the creation of a Facebook group, regular Facetime, Skype or ZOOM meetings, whatever is your style, let us know and if you would like our assistance or support to create such a connection we may be able to help.

Additionally, we would like to know how the threat of the COVID-19 virus has affected, impacted or altered your organisation and, if so, what new processes, protocols, changes or activities you expect to implement. We would like to be part of those enhancements and adaptations, as we explore and investigate our capabilities to assist you.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organisations and our communities, so keeping them safe, connected, and informed will ensure a smoother and shorter transition during the recovery period and beyond.

People continue to register their interest in volunteering for both now and in the future. As we begin to develop a register of potential volunteers, we are asking you for roles that you feel support the continuation of your services and community activities. Drivers, Telephone companions, virtual support staff might be options for you to consider and I'm expect there are many other roles within your organisation to support your service options during this time.

Please remember - Armidale Volunteer Referral Service is still your "Go-to" resource centre for volunteering as we move through this challenging time.

Our contact details remain the same and as I'm working from home your emails and calls should be answered as usual.

Please stay safe and observe the government protocols – hopefully this will reduce the time we have to self-isolate and modify our work practices.

Best wishes

Jane



Good afternoon everyone

Please find attached an updated version of the CHSP FAQs for service providers.

Please share with your staff.

[Further information for staff and the public is available on the Department of Health's web-site.](#)

Kind regards

---

## **Drew Ross**

### **Assistant Director**

Health Grants NSW & ACT

Community Grants Hub

Department of Social Services

**P:** (02) 9942 5723 | **E:** [drew.ross@dss.gov.au](mailto:drew.ross@dss.gov.au)

[communitygrants.gov.au](http://communitygrants.gov.au)

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to Elders both past and present.



Frequently asked  
questions - For CHS