

PANDEMIC COMMUNICATION: COVID-19 COMMUNITY PROVIDER UPDATE

8 APRIL 2020

This update is prepared by the Capital & Coast, Wairarapa and Hutt Valley District Health Boards. It is consistent with Ministry of Health advice. The Ministry of Health remains the definitive source of information.

Our focus is on ensuring you have the information you need, when you need it, in order for you to care for your staff and the people who depend on your service.

Any questions regarding this communication may be directed to COVID-19Questions@ccdhb.org.nz. All emails to the COVID-19 email address will be logged and responded to by an appropriate team member.

PURPOSE OF THIS ADVICE

The purpose of this advice is to share information and resources with you so you can work safely with your colleagues and the people in your care.

- WREMO’s welfare resource
- Shout out to our Workforce Office
- PPE update
- Keeping occupied during a lockdown
- Wellbeing

WREMO’S WELFARE RESOURCE

WREMO has collated an excellent one-stop-shop resource for getting the help and support you need (pictured) which can be [downloaded here at https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/Welfare-AOG-Factsheet-24-March-2020.pdf](https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/Welfare-AOG-Factsheet-24-March-2020.pdf). The Ministry of Social Development has a helpline for welfare support including access to emergency accommodation on 0800 559 009. In the event you are unable to access support through this helpline, your local Council’s Welfare Team may be able to assist:

Other helplines available:

- Call WREMO 0800 141 967 for access to food, medication and cleaning supplies.
- Call WREMO 0800 0508 754 163 for access to temporary accommodation



Remember General Practice / Primary Care remain open and should be accessed by calling them on the normal number. They are open and providing care. Do not delay making contact.

ESSENTIAL HEALTH TREATMENT

Under Alert Level 4 people can access medical care, and it is important they do so. General Practices / Primary Care are open, and GPs are working well with technology for phone and video consultations, and creating safe spaces for people coming in for face-to-face consultations. Your health is always important and if you are uncertain please call your practice directly. They will give you good advice.

Please encourage your whanau and family not to leave it too long to seek help. If you need medical attention for anything please seek help promptly.

SHOUT OUT TO OUR WORKFORCE OFFICE

The Workforce Office was established rapidly to ensure both clinical and non-clinical workers are available to meet the needs of the community in this emergency. We are pleased to report that all requests for staff have been fulfilled, albeit in creative and effective ways. Our Community Based Assessment Centres are using the skills of redeployed dental hygienists with great success.

LETTER TO COLLEAGUES ABOUT MASKS

The Infectious Diseases team is taking the pandemic very seriously and the health of our hospital workforce as well as our community workforce, is paramount.

That's why our experts – CCDHB's Mr John Tait, Chief Medical Officer and Dr Michelle Balm, Infectious Disease Physician & Clinical Microbiologist, and HVDHB's Dr Matthew Kelly, Infectious Diseases Physician, and Dr Sisira Jayasthissa, Chief Medical Officer – have written a letter to their colleagues addressing the concern about availability of masks for healthcare workers, and the desire to wear masks in situations not included in COVID-19 protocols.

The letter answers some important questions and gives the evidence-based rationale behind our advice.

It may be a bit technical, but we felt it important to share the valuable information and clarification around community transmission, asymptomatic transmission, and whether or not all healthcare workers should be wearing masks at work.

Of note is the advice around the serious risks of universal wearing of masks. "Masks may provide a false sense of security or distract from interventions which are far more likely to keep healthcare workers safe." The interventions referred to are hand hygiene, rigorous screening of all patients for symptoms and exposure, physical distancing when able, frequent cleaning, and rapid implementation of droplet precautions for patients who do have symptoms."

Please take the time to read this letter and if you have any questions, email COVID-19questions@ccdhb.org.nz

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION ADVICE ON MASK USE

On Monday 6 April the World Health Organisation provided updated advice on mask use – particularly by the general public.

"The WHO does not recommend the use of medical masks by the general public except in particular circumstances – where someone is sick and wearing a mask protects others or when someone is caring for a sick person and the mask can help protect them."

UPDATE ON PPE SUPPLY

CCDHB has been supplying PPE to acute community services (PHO and CBACs) in the 3DHB region for the past three weeks. We have also supplied PPE to many other primary care and disability services. If you wish to request PPE please send your request to PPE_COVID19COMMUNITY@ccdhb.org.nz. We will review the request and may give you a call to discuss it before sending it to the supply chain to fill. Where possible we are asking providers to pick up their PPE supplies; that saves a day on delivery and is also safer in terms of 'lost' courier packages.

KEEPING OCCUPIED DURING LOCKDOWN

Dementia New Zealand has kindly shared some tips for keeping occupied (and sane) during lockdown.

Video calling can help people with dementia stay connected, for some this might be easier than a phone call – here are some guidelines:

- Be realistic - if person is not familiar with using these, they may struggle to set up or use without support
- Limit number of people on call to a maximum of four – anymore may be difficult for person to keep up with – (some may only manage one person at a time)
- Establish a regular call time so it becomes part of person’s new routine, and they have something positive to anticipate
- Video calling during meal times for people living alone may make meal time more pleasurable (especially if others on the call are eating at the same time)
- Plan topics to talk about before calling – reminisce, discuss topics of interest – encourage opinion – ideally supporting the person to talk rather than simply listening to you
- If the person lives in care facility – call the facility ahead of time to discuss their ability to assist with video calling and the best time to do this.

WELLBEING

The Ministry of Health has partnered with *All Right?* an organisation that supported Cantabrians following the Christchurch and Kaikoura earthquakes. They have developed some fabulous resources to support mental health and wellbeing through COVID-19.

You can find their resources [here at https://www.allright.org.nz/campaigns/getting-through-together](https://www.allright.org.nz/campaigns/getting-through-together), covering topics such as top tips for getting through, getting through together, how to talk to your kids about COVID-19, making home learning and working do-able, and how to get through lockdown.

QUESTIONS

Again, please email any questions to COVID-19questions@ccdhb.org.nz and a member of our team will respond.

THANK YOU

We would like to recognise and thank you for the work that you are doing. We are aware that our community providers are front and centre in the COVID-19 response and we appreciate your commitment and professionalism in these challenging times.

Rachel Haggerty

Incident Controller
Community IMT