

Pandemic response

CORONAVIRUS INFECTION CONTROL



This COVID-19 Resource Kit is an example only. You should consider if any or all of the resources herein are relevant/ appropriate/ fit for purpose to your practice and adjust/ include or exclude accordingly.

This example is provided in good faith on the basis that it is often easier to adjust something than it is to create it from scratch.

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Pandemic response

CORONAVIRUS INFECTION CONTROL

Objective

- To provide a safe work environment for support team and GP's
- To provide high quality, evidence-based care for our patients based on advice from Federal Department of Health and RACGP as per Pandemic Guidelines
- Reduce the chance of exposure and spread of nCoV in our community

Background

- nCoV emerged from China Jan 2020
- Spread by aerosol droplets (coughing and sneezing) and direct contact if the other person touches their mouth or eyes
- There is much unknown and advice will change.

Policy

To enact the <CLINIC NAME> Pandemic Response Plan.

Transmission based precautions are used for patients known or suspected to be infected with highly transmissible pathogens. Transmission based precautions are measures used in addition to standard precautions when extra barriers are required to prevent transmission of specific infectious diseases.

Our staff are educated in how to triage and apply transmission based precautions for patients known or suspected or with a potential communicable disease.

Transmission based precautions require:

- 'isolation' of the infectious source to prevent transmission of the infectious agent to susceptible people in the health care setting.
- a means for alerting people entering an isolation area of the need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent disease transmission.



Responsibilities of Staff



CLINICAL LEAD

1. Clinical Lead - during a pandemic

- Must be notified of any potential patient or identified risk
- Will coordinate pandemic response
- Undertake a risk assessment for patients, staff, GPs and business
- Collect data
- Coordinate communication to patients, staff and GPs
- May delegate tasks to staff and GPs



ADMIN

2. Administration

- If patient calls, advise NOT TO come into clinic.
- Transfer call to practice nurse.
- Follow Flow Chart:
What to do if a patient is at front desk. Refer to Procedures.
- Decommission room and clean after patient has left. Refer to practice infection control protocols.
- Triage if low risk or high risk for patients requesting a clearance certificate. Do not allow a patient to come into clinic if deemed high risk.



NURSE

3. Nursing

- Nursing Lead to coordinate, educate and inform nursing staff.
- To give correct and current phone advice to patients.
- To ensure each room has a PPE kit that is in date.
- To ensure that <NOMINATED ROOM> as the isolation room is maintained during pandemic.
- To ensure infection control measures are in place.
- Prepare a kit for home visits/car consultations.
- To educate staff on correct use of PPE.
- To educate staff on handwashing.
- To place posters on handwashing, information etc in practice.



GENERAL PRACTITIONER

4. General Practitioners

- To ensure that they know how to use PPE register in competency /staff training record.
- To remain current with advice from Federal Department of Health.
- To follow recommendations from Department of Health regarding investigation and management of patients with suspected Coronavirus.

Workflow



ADMIN

- No symptoms - book
- Symptoms - transfer nurse
- Patient is in the practice and symptomatic - ask patient to return to their car where the clinic will call with further instructions.



NURSE

Triage:

- A Stay home (self-isolate). Nil further
- B Teleconsult
- C Check Clinic
- D Go to hospital.



GENERAL
PRACTITIONER

- Teleconsult
- Check Clinic
- Transfer to hospital
- If sick, isolate in room - provide a mask. Wash hands. Leave room. Put on PPE gear and return preference to one clinician treating the same patient.

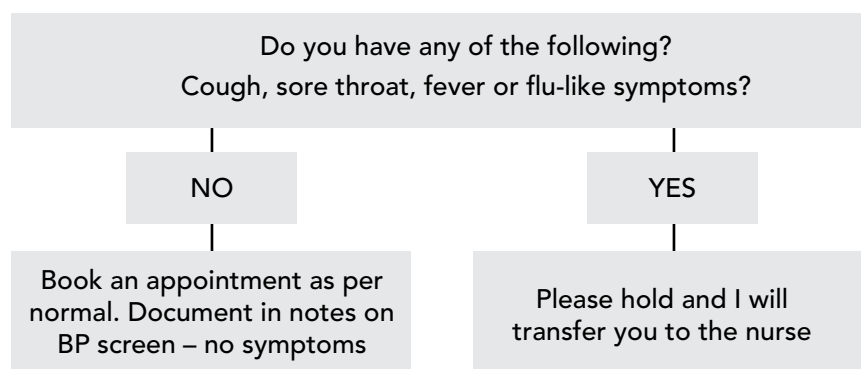


Appointment Workflows Administration

SCRIPT: PHONE APPOINTMENTS

Welcome to <PRACTICE NAME> , <PERSON'S NAME> speaking

Due to the Corona virus outbreak, would you mind if I asked you a few more questions?



WHEN PATIENTS WHO HAVE EXISTING APPOINTMENTS ARRIVE

If symptomatic, ask patient to return to their car. The GP will visit them there - ask for the car details so the GP can locate it in the carpark. Inform the GP.

Patients with appointments who call from their car - ask for car details so the GP can locate it in the carpark. Inform the GP.

Billing:

- Children up to 12 years will continue to be bulk billed.
- Adults will be charged. Administration to call patient for payment details. We will send the Medicare claim online.

PATIENTS BOOKED FOR TELEHEALTH CONSULT

- Patient appointments will be booked by the nurse.
- Administration to call patient for payment details prior to consultation.
- Currently, patients will be charged a private fee but this may change with the Telehealth item number.

CHECK CLINIC

- These will run every day between <TIME>. The <NOMINATED> room has been set up to do the consultations. Patients will come through the outside door straight into the room.
- A GP will be allocated to these clinics. They are booked by the nurse only at this stage.
- Normal billing applies.

Phone on hold message

Thank you for calling <NAME OF CLINIC>. If this is an emergency please hang up and call 000.

At <NAME OF CLINIC> we wish to keep our patients and staff safe. If you think that you may have Coronavirus, respiratory symptoms or flu-like symptoms please do not come into the clinic.

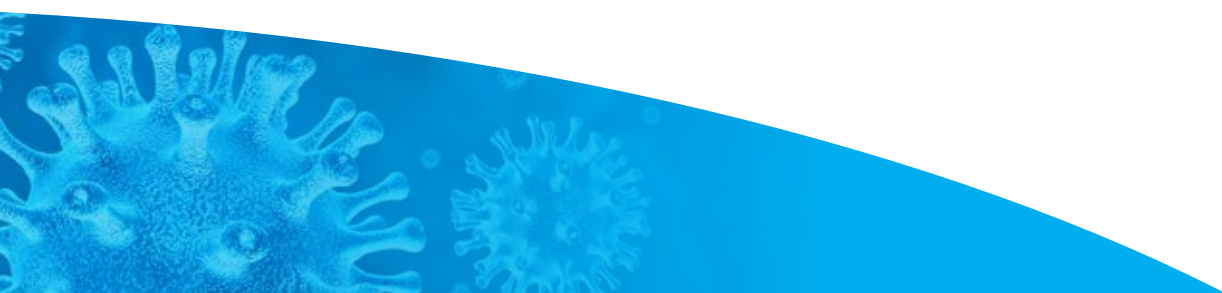
You will be asked by reception if you or the person you are making the appointment for have the following symptoms.

- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Or flu-like symptoms

For people that have respiratory or flu-like symptoms there are 4 options:

1. If only mild symptoms please self-isolate and stay home
2. Teleconsultation – a consultation without leaving your house may be arranged
3. Check Clinic – This is held from <TIME> daily at the <LOCATION>. Please remain in your car until called to attend
4. Hospital

Thanks for holding. Our support staff will be with you shortly.

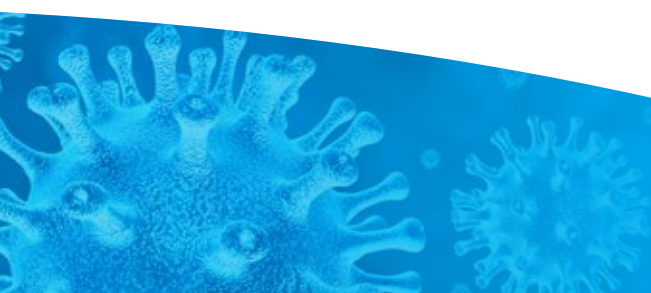


Checklist - Reception

- Remove all multi-use products from reception:
 - magazines to be disposed of
 - childrens toys removed and put away
- Ensure A3 "STOP" Poster is appended to all Practice Entry doors and in the car park as appropriate
- Ensure all patients are asked COVID 19 protocol questions prior to making a patient booking
- Ensure symptomatic patients are told not to come into the practice and arrange a rostered COVID-19 response GP/nurse to contact them via phone

Checklist - Practice Nurse

- Ensure COVID 19 message is prevalent on the practice website
- Ensure COVID 19 advice is disseminated to patients via email and social media
- Ensure all PPE stocks are available and maintained
- Send out daily update to staff
- Schedule training for staff as required
- Ensure Pandemic Policies and procedures are printed and emailed and available to all staff
- Identify staff (ensuring privacy):
 - with coronary disease risk factors
 - with respiratory disease risk factors
 - who are immunocompromised
 - who care for someone who is immunocompromised
 - who are symptomatic, flu-like symptoms





Nurse Script

Thanks for holding, you're speaking with <PERSON'S NAME>.

Can you tell me more about your symptoms?

We are working hard to keep our patients and staff safe. We ask that patients with your symptoms NOT come into the clinic. Based in your symptoms, we have 4 options to assist you.

1. **Check Clinic** which is held daily between <TIME> which is billed at our normal rate, or
2. **Teleconsult** – your usual GP who will consult with you over the phone. This will be a cost for this clinic which is <\$ AMOUNT> or <\$ AMOUNT> if a pensioner or child, or
3. **Visit the base hospital**, or
4. **Stay home and self-quarantine** until symptoms pass.

What option would you prefer?

- **If the patient chooses option 1 (Check clinic):**
I can book you in at <TIME>. Please call the clinic, don't come in and on arrival and stay in your car. Please do not enter the main door.

Call us on <PHONE NUMBER> to let us know you're here, and when the GP is ready, they will call you to follow the signs, to the <NOMINATED ROOM>.

You'll see that the GP will be in full protective gear – this is a precaution we are taking for all of our patients to keep you and the GP safe.
- **If the patient chooses option 2 (Teleconsult):**
Instruct on car/ambulance and phone number of hospital.
- **If the patient chooses option 3 (The base hospital):**
The hospital can be contacted on <PHONE NUMBER>, and is located at <ADDRESS>.
- **If the patient chooses option 4 (Stay home an self quarantine):**
This means not leaving the house or accepting visitors until symptoms have gone.



Procedure - Nurse

TASK	COMPLETED
Organise a daily brief to nursing team	
Provide correct and current advice to patients as per federal Department of Health https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-management/managing-emergencies-and-pandemics/managing-pandemics/management-of-pandemics	
If you are concerned that a patient is at risk notify the Clinical Lead immediately	
Ensure each room has a PPE kit that is in date and stocked with gown, gloves and surgical mask.	
Ensure that <NOMINATED ROOM> as the isolation room is maintained during pandemic:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove computer, keyboard, printer 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPE kit is accessible outside the room with gown, gloves, goggles and a mask (P2 or N95) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pen and paper for notes. Can be transcribed later into Best Practice 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dedicated stethoscope, auroscope, thermometer which is to be cleaned in-between patients and not to be removed from the room 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bin with a yellow binliner 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinell wipes 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soap 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand sanitiser 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean equipment "Dirty – to be cleaned" bucket 	
Prepare a kit for home visits/car consultations	
Educate staff on correct use of PPE (keep records of competency in personal file)	
Educate staff on handwashing	
Collect daily log of phone calls taken and advice given. Data to be sent to the Clinical Lead at end of week. (Record advice in patient clinical record EMR)	



Procedure - GP

If you are immunosuppressed, have a respiratory condition or are pregnant you should not see a patient who is deemed at risk of nCoV.

- Ensure that you know how to fit yourself with PPE
- <NAME OF ROOM> has been stripped back to bare basics. Do not use your own equipment, use what has been supplied – stethoscope, auscultoscope, thermometer, BP cuff, pen and paper. Records to be transferred to Best Practice later.
- If you suspect a patient has nCoV contact The Australian Government Department of Health Public Health Information hotline: 1800 004 599 for further instruction.
- Do not swab as we do not have a negative pressure room and there is a protocol around how to take the swabs. Send patient to pathology provider for this process.
- Place used equipment in bucket called “Dirty – equipment to be cleaned’ and inform nurses.
- When patient has left, inform reception who will decommission and clean room.
- Close the door.
- Notify the Clinical Lead, so she can manage data.

Coronavirus Consultation

DO YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS?

☐ Fever ☐ Cough ☐ Sore throat ☐ Flu-like symptoms

If yes to symptoms:

When did the symptoms start?

Does anyone in your household have similar symptoms?

Have you been in close contact with anyone diagnosed with Coronavirus?

HAVE YOU TRAVELLED OVERSEAS IN THE LAST 2 WEEKS?

Where:

Dates:

Type of travel? (ie: plane, cruise)

Did you travel with anyone?

ASSESSMENT:

- ☐ No further assessment required
- ☐ Further assessment required for Coronavirus
- ☐ Other illness unrelated to Coronavirus and advised accordingly
- ☐ Patient advised of risk assessment and follow up plan.

PLAN:

1. Self-isolate at home <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov> until results available. Results take 1-2 days.
2. Advise patient to attend pathology company and to call them on arrival. Patient to wait in car for pathology staff to come to them for swab in their car.
3. Pathology to be advised of arrival.
4. Contact The Australian Government Department of Health Public Health Information hotline:1800 004 599 or fill on form <NAME OF FORM>.
5. If condition deteriorates call base hospital to advise of arrival.



Check Clinic procedure for GP

1. Enter room
2. Put on PPE - mask, gown, gloves
3. Reception will call when your patient/s have arrived, as well as mark them as "arrived" on BP
4. Open patient file
5. Use *covid to open proforma on the computer
6. Call patient from phone in clinic to notify them to follow the signs to the <NOMINATED ROOM>
7. Open the door and let the patient enter
8. Patient to sit on chair closest to door. A mask can be left there for the patient to use
9. Take history and examine as needed, without touching the computer or telephone
10. Once you have completed your examination, remove your gloves and re-glove
11. Type your certificates, write your notes, print any pathology forms, etc and place on chair for patient to take - do not touch the patient
12. NOTE:
 - a basic medical certificate will be needed for POTENTIALLY POSITIVE patients
 - a basic letter to Emergency Department will be needed for POTENTIAL POSITIVE patients
 - regular medical certificates can be used for people who are UNLIKLEY to be positive
 - regular SNP, Clinical Labs or Pathology services (that provide tests for the clinic, Sullivan Nicoledes Pathology SNP etc) forms can be used to request "NPS PCR - Respiratory + Covid19 Viruses"
 - there will be printouts of the "COVID 19 Notifier" that need to be faxed if you are testing
13. Open the door for the patient as they leave
14. Wipe down all surfaces with V. Wipes
15. Remove your gloves and re-glove
16. Repeat steps 3 - 14 for every patient
17. At the end of the clinic, wipe down all surfaces, remove your PPE, and ensure you have decontaminated everything possible before returning to your regular clinic
18. If at any time you feel your gown or mask have been contaminated, saturated, soiled or otherwise are needing changing, do so whilst adhering to the proper PPE guidelines.

[illegible]

Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) Low Risk Notification

(To be set up on Practice/Clinic letterhead).

**** Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) Low Risk Notification****

This is to certify that on <DAY AND DATE>, I examined <PT FIRST NAME> <PT SURNAME> and they are clear to attend work from <START DATE>.

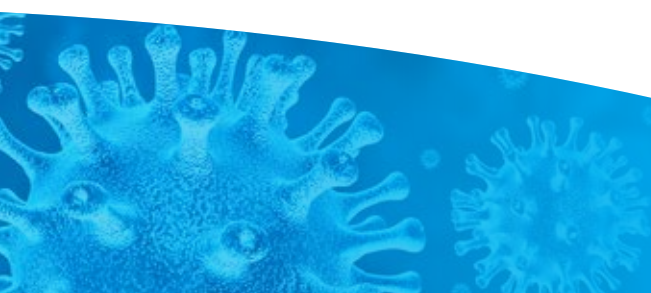
The purpose of this document is to confirm that <PT FIRST NAME> <PT SURNAME> has not returned from China nor have they been in contact with a verified case of novel Coronavirus within the past 14 days. The patient states that they have no symptoms of fever, cough, sneezing and states that they feel well. Examination was normal. This is based on the information they provided and the current advice from the Australian Government

As such this patient DOES NOT represent a public health risk based on the guidelines available at this moment and can re-attend or continue to attend the workplace

<GP NAME>

<GP QUALIFICATIONS>

<TODAY'S DATE>



Example email communication with patients

(To be set up on Practice/Clinic letterhead).

**** [PRACTICE NAME] AND CORONAVIRUS****

We need to be part of the solution not part of the problem.

As at 11:00 hrs on 11 March 2020, we have 112 confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), including 3 deaths, in Australia.

- 60 in New South Wales
- 15 in Queensland
- 6 in South Australia
- 2 in Tasmania
- 15 in Victoria*
- 4 in Western Australia
- 10 associated with the Diamond Princess cruise ship

* Note: Victoria case count includes a case detected in NSW. Under the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System reporting requirements the case is considered a Victorian case.

We extend our condolences to the families involved.

Of the 112 Australian cases reported, 24 of these cases are reported to have recovered.

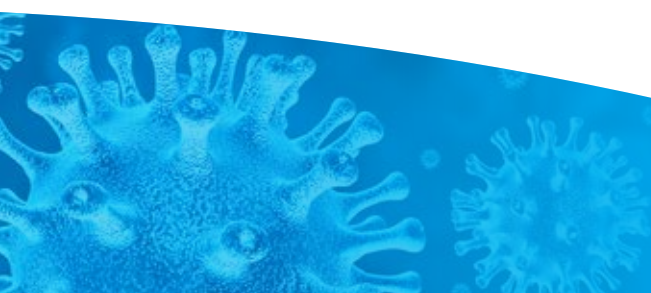
To put it in context. 30 people have died in the last month on NSW roads and on average the flu takes 200 lives a year in NSW alone.

Those most at risk of death from COVID-19 are those with cardiac and respiratory conditions, those who are immunocompromised and in particular the elderly with chronic disease likely to be complicated by contracting COVID-19.

For the rest of the population without other risk factors, contracting COVID-19 is likely to be similar to contracting the common cold. You will recover within a relatively short period.

There is no need to panic, stress, behave badly or irrationally, nor have the behaviour that we have witnessed in shopping centres.

(continued on next page)



We do however need to take measures to ensure we are not part of the spread and that you are all safe when attending the clinic.

1. Support immune function.
 - Get adequate sleep
 - Eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables
 - Exercise regularly
 - Try and keep your stress levels to a minimum
2. We will ensure if any staff are returning from overseas and are recommended voluntary isolation by the Australian government that we will not have them return to the clinics until the recommended isolation time has lapsed.
3. We will now start asking all patients booking over the phone if they are:
 - Symptomatic – with flu like symptoms: Cough, Fever, Shortness of breath/ breathing difficulties
 - Have been in mainland China, Italy, South Korea, Iran
 - Clients who have travelled to any high-risk areas may be given alternative clinical consult options for treatment.
 - Associated with any person who has a confirmed COVID-19 infection
4. You may be asked to remain in your car or not enter the practice if you are symptomatic, but should this occur we will provide an alternate clinical service. The Australian Government has made phone consultations possible for affected and or at risk patients.
5. Our practitioners will wash hands throughout the day, use gloves and protective personal equipment as indicated with and in between patients.
6. Hand Sanitiser will be available throughout the clinic and all bathrooms will have disinfectant hand wash/soap. Please wash your hands when you arrive in the clinic.
7. Health organisation signs will be put up in Staff areas with tips to be aware of as a practitioner and also in common areas for patients.
8. All door handles, EFTPOS terminals, phones, reception desk, water filters and common areas will be wiped with sanitisers continuously throughout the day.
9. We will throw away the magazines and other multi use items in the reception space. Kids toys will be hidden for this time.

We will do our bit to ensure that the clinic is a clean and safe place to come.

Please help us help our local community by keeping us informed of any symptoms you might be experiencing.



Related Documents

<https://www.racgp.org.au/download/Documents/Guidelines/Flukit/pandemic-flu-kit.pdf>

<https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-management/managing-emergencies-and-pandemics/managing-pandemics/management-of-pandemics>

<https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-management/managing-emergencies-and-pandemics/managing-pandemics/management-of-pandemics>

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/infection-prevention-and-control/national-hand-hygiene-initiative-nhhi/promotional-materials>

<https://www.avant.org.au/Resources/Public/Coronavirus/>

Attachment 1. Low Risk Certificate

Attachment 2. High risk Certificate

