

GREAT OCEAN ROAD HEALTH CEO UPDATE ON CORONAVIRUS (COVID 19)

Mar 24, 2020

Great Ocean Road Health is adequately prepared to support the communities we serve. We have activated our infectious disease pandemic plan, and are tailoring this plan for COVID 19, which ensures we have the infrastructure isolation, the equipment and the workforce to keep our communities and staff safe.

How is Great Ocean Road Health assisting our community?

We have daily updates from the Department of Health and we have an all Victorian CEO's, Clinical Services Managers and Safety Care staff meeting on a regular basis. This Chief Health Officer update is intended to provide clinicians and the Victorian public with information about the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Victoria, as well as relevant public health response activities in Victoria.

Key staff across both sites attend a daily situational analysis meeting to discuss current situations from staffing, local issues, changes of processes and recording any changes in requirement from the State and Commonwealth governments. Some of this information is also collected by the department of health and human service (DHHS). We are also changing our workplace model over the next few weeks to fit with the recommendation of social distancing. Staff will be asked to work from home (administration/finance etc) to eliminate contamination to our medical staff and patients. You can no longer book online appointments through the Lorne Medical Centre and scheduled appointments may change on a daily basis. The best advice for anyone who requires medical attention is to call first, so we can screen your call (unless arriving via ambulance). This procedure is to simply prevent the contamination of the virus (one of our Doctors may suddenly become unwell). Please be patient with our reception and medical staff during this difficult time.

Restrictions are now in place for visitors within our aged care facilities. Again, this may change on a regular basis, so please keep up to date with the latest developments. Posters will be displayed throughout the Hospital, on our website or via social media.

The use of telehealth services, particularly if you are isolated for 14 days, will be used for a range of GP/ specialists consultations. This will be conducted via facetime/skype or phone. If telehealth services are required, please contact our reception staff to see if you are eligible.

We also have a Nurse Unit Manager at Lorne Community Hospital who is an Australian Medical Assistance Team (AUSMAT) with COVID 19 experience, as part of the pandemic leadership team.

How can you help stop the spread of COVID-19 and stay healthy

- Things to do keep your-self healthy...number one is give up smoking. Eat healthy food like fresh fruit and vegetables and keep exercising. Look after yourself and each other. Be kind to people over the next 6 months.
- Everyone must practise good hygiene to protect against infection and prevent the virus spreading. Wash hand regularly with soap and water.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth. No handshaking or hugging, keep 1.5m distance and avoid social outings.
- Ring the virus hotline....we only test for COVID-19 if people meet the criteria. If people are worried please ring the coronavirus health information line on 131 450. This service operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- If your symptoms are more severe, for example, with difficulty breathing, or you have another emergency condition, please visit our Urgent Care Department.
- Try to avoid over stimulation via social media and TV, the best advice and current status regarding the pandemic is to follow the Department of Health website <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

If you have recently relocated to Lorne or Apollo bay and work in the medical field (nurse or Doctor) and would like to offer your services on a casual basis, we would love to hear from you.

Please remember that health is changing every-day and GORH needs to be on top of the game and make informed quick decisions about the pandemic.

To keep updated on Great Ocean Road Health's news and events, follow us on facebook – [greatoceanroadhealth](#), [lornemedicalcentre](#) or [apollobaymedicalcentre](#). Our friendly staff are always available to answer any questions, no matter how big or small. Your health is our number one priority and keeping our community safe and protected over the coming months is high on our agenda.

Sandy Chamberlin

CEO Great Ocean Road Health