



# Aboriginal Sector Communication Update #9

**Friday 23 October 2020 12:00 Hours**

This regular statewide communication update is to keep health professionals abreast of the state-wide public health messages and resources that have been developed by Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) for the Aboriginal community and health professionals for COVID-19.

In this update we focus on worker wellbeing during COVID-19 and list a range of resources.

## COVID-19 case numbers

- As of **23 October** 2020, there are **753** confirmed cases, **36** historical cases and **52** active cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **692** people have recovered from COVID-19 in WA. There have been **9** deaths from COVID-19 in WA.
- To date **473,120** COVID-19 tests have been conducted in WA.
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports](#)

## National COVID-19 Aboriginal epidemiological profile

Updates on COVID-19 among Aboriginal Australians, key insights #11, data as of **27 September** 2020:

- **0.5% (148 cases)** of all COVID-19 positive (confirmed) cases (**27,095** notified in the Australian *National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System* (NNDSS) were recorded as Aboriginal people – an increase of **14** cases from the previous update.
- Aboriginal females recorded a higher proportion of cases (**58%; 86 cases**) than Aboriginal males (**42%; 62 cases**).
- Of the total **148** Aboriginal COVID-19 positive cases, **78% (116 persons)** acquired their infection locally, while **21% (31 persons)** acquired their infections overseas, and **one** case had an unknown source of infection.
- Of the total **116** Aboriginal persons who acquired their infections locally, **78% (90 persons)** acquired the infection in a major city, **13% (15 persons)** acquired the infection in an inner regional area, **5% (6 persons)** acquired the infection in an outer regional area, and **3% (4 persons)** acquired infection from interstates and **1% (1 person)** acquired infection in the remote area.
- Of the **31** Aboriginal people who acquired the infection overseas, **45% (14 persons)** were linked to cruise ships.
- **11% (16 cases)** of Aboriginal cases required hospital admission, while **89% (132)** required quarantine/isolation. **No deaths** were recorded among Aboriginal positive cases.
- The median age of Aboriginal positive cases is **32** years; compared to **37** years for non-Aboriginal people.

## Latest updates

### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19 Communiqués

The latest versions of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19 Communiqués published and current areas of focus are available [here](#).

#### Update on the management of vessels in WA waters

WA Health has now successfully managed outbreaks on Artania, Al Kuwait, Patricia Oldendorff, and Vega Dream, and is now dealing with outbreaks on the Al Messilah and Key Integrity, both of which are docked in Fremantle.

No port in Western Australia is allowing shore-leave for any international maritime crew. This means that no-one can disembark a vessel except for medical treatment, where appropriate safety procedures are put in place. This is an extra layer of border security in place to protect the Western Australian community.

#### Phase 4 extended

Phase 4 has been amended and extended. Starting from Saturday, 24 October, selected venues that predominantly hold seated events are exempt from the 2 square metre rule and may operate at 60 per cent capacity for seated performances. See the [WA Roadmap](#).

## Aboriginal COVID-19 resources

### Priority COVID-19 health messages for Aboriginal people

Aboriginal health professionals and sector representatives are encouraged to promote and reinforce the following key messages to Aboriginal clients and community. Remember to:

- continue to physical distance where possible
- continue to practise good hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- stay at home if unwell and rest to stay strong
- if unwell with flu-like symptoms, get tested (make sure to self-isolate until you receive your test result)
- make sure your family gets the flu vaccine
- keep attending your regular health checks, especially for chronic illnesses
- download the [COVIDSafe app](#)
- look after your mental health and social emotional wellbeing during this time.

#### Resource on self-isolating after being tested

We've been hearing that there is a bit of confusion among patients/clients about self-isolating after they've been tested so we thought it was worth calling attention to the fact sheet on [Self-isolation information after testing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

### Statewide Aboriginal resources

A suite of statewide Aboriginal tailored resources has been developed by WA Health for the community and health professionals, to promote awareness and provide up-to-date COVID-19 information that is culturally safe.

The aim of providing culturally-appropriate communications is to increase awareness and reduce anxiety and fear in our communities. We encourage Aboriginal health professionals to demonstrate leadership when working with the Aboriginal community by:

- Being “on message”
- Reinforcing and encouraging people to ‘stay vigilant’ and ‘don’t get complacent’
- Using positive strength-based messaging and language
- Ensure consistent, accurate and timely communication is provided, based on the official public health messages and health information issued by the Chief Health Officer from the Department of Health.

Refer to the [Department of Health COVID-9 website](#) for up-to-date information

**Health services are welcome to tailor and localise Department of Health COVID-19 Aboriginal resources to meet community needs.**

**Please reference the Department of Health WA and contact PHEOC  
([pheoc@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:pheoc@health.wa.gov.au)) for further information.**

## All resources for the Aboriginal Sector

[WA Department of Health – Aboriginal Sector](#)

- **Aboriginal sector communication updates**
  - Communication update #1
  - Communication update #2
  - Communication update #3
  - Communication update #4
  - Communication update #5
  - Communication update #6
  - Communication update #7
  - Communication update #8
  - **Communication update #9**
- **Aboriginal health professionals**
  - Aboriginal ethical position statement
  - Beating the bugs, colds and viruses
  - Guide for Aboriginal health staff
  - Guide for Funeral and Sorry Business
  - How to identify Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients
  - Information for Aboriginal people (HealthyWA)
- **External stakeholder resources**
  - Resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and remote communities
  - COVID-19 resource toolkit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professional (NATSIHWA)
- **Remote and rural planning**
  - Remote Aboriginal communities – restrictions on entering (WA Government)
  - Remote Aboriginal communities – safety and support measures (WA Government)
  - Checklist for remote clinics in Aboriginal communities (WACHS)
  - Health guidance for remote Aboriginal communities of Western Australia (DoH)

[HealthyWA - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) for Aboriginal People](#)

- **Fact sheets**
  - COVID-19 general information for Aboriginal people to stay safe
  - Information flyer for Aboriginal people – what you need to know

- Information for a confirmed case
- Information for a close contact of a confirmed case
- Information for your quarantine stay
- Self-isolation information after testing for COVID-19
- Where to get tested for COVID-19 in Regional and Remote WA
- **Posters**
  - Poster – Essential tips for travellers
  - Poster – Personal hygiene
  - Poster – Physical distancing
  - Poster – Stay strong when you are sick
  - Poster – Staying well on my travels
  - Poster – Symptoms and what to do if unwell
  - Poster – Visit your doctor
- **Video/radio messages**
  - Phase 4 update – English
  - Phase 4 update – Kriol
  - Phase 4 update – Martu
  - Phase 4 update – Ngaanytjarra
  - Radio – Physical distancing – let’s work together to protect our mob
  - Radio – Protect yourself and other with good hygiene
  - Radio – Stay at home if you are sick
  - TV commercial – Good hygiene with Mary G
  - TV commercial – Social distancing with Mary G
  - Video - Beating the bugs, colds and viruses
  - Video - Mary G telehealth and regular checkups
- **Other resources available**
  - Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA)
  - Resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and remote communities (Australian Government)
- **GPs and other support phone lists**
  - Goldfields
  - Great Southern
  - Kimberley
  - Midwest
  - Perth
  - Pilbara
  - South West
  - Wheatbelt

## Worker wellbeing during COVID-19

- **NATSIHWA’s COVID-19 resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals**

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association (NATSIHWA) has created a booklet to help health professionals quickly access information relevant to their state, territory or Aboriginal community-controlled health organisation. It includes information on ‘looking after yourself’.

  - [COVID-19 resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals](#)

- **NACCHO's COVID-19 Primary Healthcare Guidance**

Then National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) has developed [resources on primary healthcare guidance](#), including a few focusing on worker safety and wellbeing:

- [What social and emotional wellbeing and mental health care/support is needed for health care workers \(HCWs\) in the context of COVID-19?](#)
- [How do health care workers minimise their risk of acquiring infection and of spreading infection between patients while physically examining a patient with respiratory symptoms?](#)
- [What quarantine measures are required for healthcare workers travelling from higher prevalence areas to low prevalence areas?](#)
- [What quarantine measures are required for healthcare workers travelling to remote communities?](#)

- **HealthInfoNet's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers/Health Practitioners portal**

The HealthInfoNet has a [portal for Aboriginal health professionals](#) that provides resources and publications on how to [take care of yourself](#). This includes information on worker wellbeing during COVID-19.

- **Worker mental health resources by the Black Dog Institute**

The Black Dog Institute has put together a [suite of mental health resources](#) for health professionals<sup>1</sup>:

- [A weekly mental health check-in](#)
- [Depression in health care workers during COVID-19](#)
- [Exercising for our mental health during COVID-19](#)
- [Health Care Workers: financial stress and mental health](#)
- [Health Care Workers: parenting in the pandemic](#)
- [Managing health anxiety](#)
- [Managing your mental health at home: information about working from home during COVID-19](#)
- [Quick relaxation techniques for healthcare workers](#)
- [Sleep, fatigue and stress in health care workers](#)
- [Tips to manage anxiety during times of uncertainty](#)
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- **The Essential Network (TEN) app by the Black Dog Institute**

The [Essential Network \(TEN\) app](#) aims to support health professionals manage life and work during COVID-19.<sup>1</sup> The TEN app connects and provides fast, easy, anytime access to evidence-based tools, resources, programs and specialists.

Developed by health professionals for health professionals, it's a one stop resource and help centre that provides self-assessment, self-management and treatment for stress, anxiety and symptoms of depression.

- [Link to the Apple app](#)
- [Link to the Android app](#)

## Who to contact for more information

- **COVID-19 Clinic ONLY Test Results Enquiry Line:** [1800 313 223](tel:1800313223) (Note: **NOT** for GP referred testing or private pathology clinic tests)

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<sup>1</sup> These resources were not designed specifically for Aboriginal health professionals.

- **COVID-19 WA Public Information Line:** [132 6843 \(13 COVID\)](tel:1326843)
- **COVID-19 Travel Restrictions Exemption Application:** Visit the [G2G PASS](#) website or complete the [exemption application form](#)
  - **COVID-19 WA Police Line:** [131 444](tel:131444) to report breaches of: self-isolation, business closures, border controls and other State of Emergency Directions.

Last updated **23 October 2020**

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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