

## **COVID-19 response update for primary care and allied health practitioners**

*Department of Health Webinar, 2:30pm Thursday 9 July 2020*

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- Clinicians are advised to maintain good hygiene practices by (a) regularly washing hands, (b) asking clients with flu-like symptoms not to attend the practice, (c) maintaining 1.5 metre social distancing and (d) following cough and sneeze etiquette. Clinicians should also continue to utilise telehealth where appropriate.
- Where community transmission is significant and 1.5 metre social distancing is not possible, the use of masks is recommended. This includes home visits and applies to all practitioners in greater Melbourne and the Shire of Mitchell.
- Masks continue to be accessible through Primary Health Networks (PHNs).
- Further advice for proper use of masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):
  - Avoid touching your face or the mask when in use.
  - Change your mask after four hours or when it becomes moist.
  - Masks should not be reused, even if they were used for less than 4 hours.
  - Face shields are an acceptable alternative but should be cleaned between uses.
- Clinicians who have not already done so are strongly encouraged to complete the Department of Health's COVID-19 infection control online training. Register [here](#).

### **CALD and ATSI Communities**

- It was acknowledged that there are particular challenges associated with delivering care in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) communities. The Department of Health continues to work to address these issues.
- Clinicians and their clients may wish to utilise the translated COVID-19 resources developed by the Department of Home Affairs and Department of Health. Access the documents [here](#).

### **COVIDSafe App**

- Clinicians and their clients are encouraged to download the COVIDSafe App to assist the Department of Health with contact tracing.

### **New Commonwealth Chief Allied Health Officer**

- Dr Anne-Marie Boxall has a background in physiotherapy and health policy. She looks forward to working with the sector to bolster the role of allied health in our care system.
- Her key message to clinicians and clients is to maintain their health and wellbeing throughout the pandemic by continuing to engage with the health system as needed.