

ORG 007	Covid 19 Policy
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About the Policy

This policy will provide the guidance for how the Neighbourhood Care Group will treat and act towards the Covid 19 Pandemic. The policy is accompanied with an Emergency and Disaster Management Plan that will support the policy statements and provide organisational clarity for all states.

Record of policy development		
Version	Date approved	Date for review
February 2022 / V1.0	TBA	August 2022

Last Change History		
Version	Date approved	Date for review

Responsibilities and delegations	
This policy applies to	This policy applies to: all staff / contractors/ individuals and their families / volunteers and other stakeholders
Specific responsibilities	The director/s are responsible for ensuring this policy applies to are aware of and understand this policy.
Policy approval	The director/s will be responsible for approving this policy.

Policy context – this policy relates to:	
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Health (https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/disability-sector/workers)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland Government (https://www.qld.gov.au/disability/covid-19-coronavirus/information-service-providers-workers-volunteers) • Queensland Government https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/public-health-directions/requirements-for-workers-in-healthcare-settings • WA Government https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-communities/covid-19-coronavirus-disability-services • COVID-19 – Donning and doffing personal protective equipment in primary care. https://www.health.gov.au/resources/videos/covid-19-donning-and-doffing-personal-protective-equipment-in-primary-care
Organisation policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency and Disaster Management Plan • Covid Action Plan Part 1 • Covid Action Plan Part 2
Forms, record keeping, other documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Government publication – Simple steps to stop the corona virus • Australian Government publication– Wash Dry Hands

1. Guiding Principles

Neighbourhood Care will respond to the Covid 19 pandemic in accordance with the relevant health directive for Australia and for each State.

Neighbourhood Care will develop the Emergency and Disaster Management Plan to enable continued delivery of community support services, particularly those where greater needs or risks may be present during the Covid 19 pandemic. Such plans will encompass a broad range of needs fundamental to minimising the impacts of Covid 19, including information and communication with clients, families and staff, support client continuity planning and the documentation of ongoing personal support needs.

This policy will support Individualised Covid Response Plans (CRP), where such plans will be made for each client as part of the strategy towards Covid prevention and Service Continuity.

2. Policy Statement

- Where exposure to Covid 19 may occur, prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a critical step in protecting workers, visitors, and others.

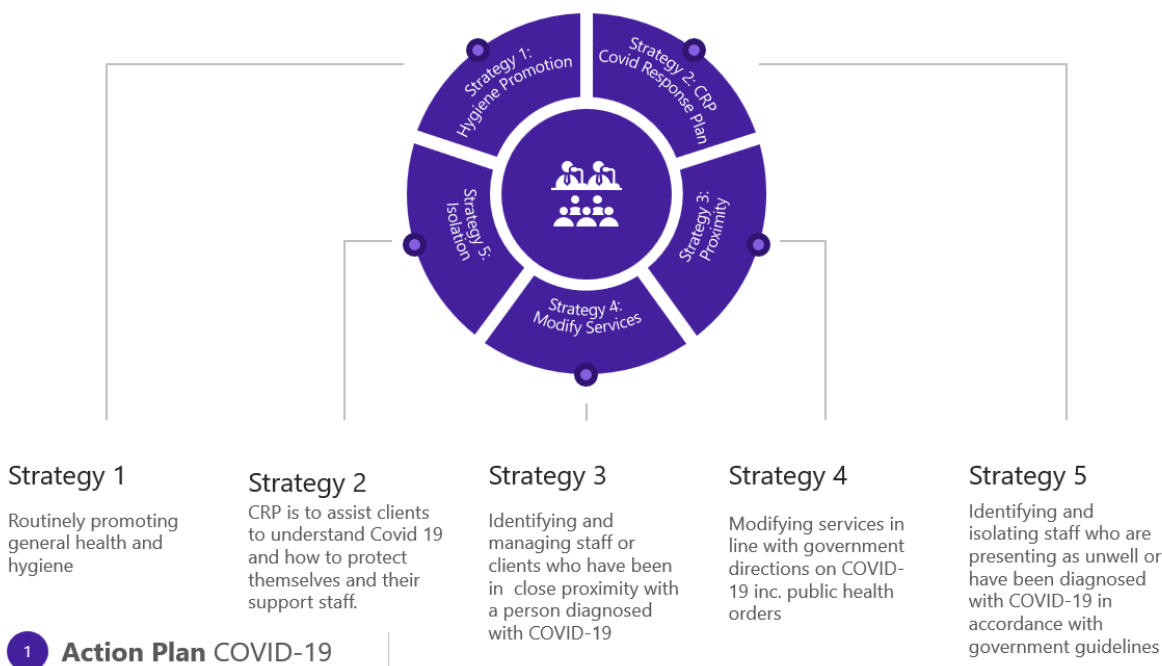
- Wherever feasible, Neighbourhood Care will keep infectious positive Covid 19 staff out of the workplace. This will include mandatory isolation leave for permanent staff and casual staff who test positive or who have symptoms. The duration of the isolation will be inline with the health directive by each state at the time of becoming infectious with Covid 19.

- If an employee develops signs or symptoms of COVID-19 at the workplace, the person should immediately finalise the shift and return home and undertake a rapid antigen test. (Similarly, advising clients who develop signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 that you will need to leave to avoid infection. Do so when it is safe to do so and notify the Planner).

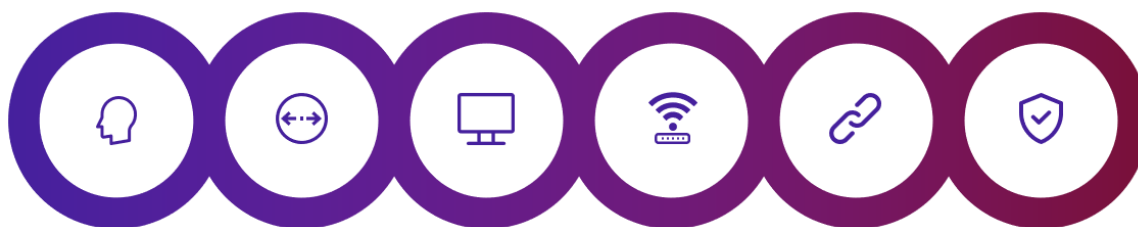
- Vaccinations are mandated in states of Australia to a varying degree. All staff employed by neighbourhood Care including any contract staff from other agencies must be vaccinated in line with the appropriate state mandate on vaccinations for disability and aged care services.

- Where a reasonable and informed instruction is provided by Neighbourhood Care regarding any matters relating to or associated with Covid 19 in any way to staff of neighbourhood Care, it is a requirement for that staff member to follow such direction. Failure to follow any such direction may lead to disciplinary matters.

3. Covid Action Plan



Covid 19 Workplace reality for everyone



Culture and awareness

Please be sensitive towards people's beliefs on vaccinations

Collaboration

Together, we will solve situations to benefit the community

Virtual work environment

Ongoing use of Video conferencing and team meetings will sustain a physical and digital work life balance for teams

Seamless Networking

Using our own networks, we will ensure timely and contemporary practices are adopted

Continuity of Support

All front line staff are classified as essential staff and will be able to continue working during the Covid 19 pandemic, including periods of lockdown.

Hygiene safety

Hand sanitiser being issued and hand hygiene training will form ongoing elements to all staff behaviours

2 Action Plan COVID-19

4. Safe Practices

- Neighbourhood Care will require staff to wear appropriate PPE, including face masks, when directed by a government health directive (federal or state) or by Neighbourhood Care. If a mask, such as an N95 or better, is needed for conducting work activities (i.e. when a client has tested positive to Covid 19), then that mask should be used, and the worker should use a disposable mask when they are not using the an N95 or better (such as during breaks or while commuting).
- Staff will be required to frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are not immediately available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as active ingredients and rub hands together until they are dry. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled.
- Staff should avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- All staff will be trained in the practice of good respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes or coughing/sneezing into your elbow/upper sleeve.
- All staff are to avoid close contact (within 1.5 meters wherever possible) with people who are visibly sick and practice physical distancing with coworkers and the public. It may not be possible to physically distance when support services are being performed. Close attention to suitable PPE must be adhered to in known covid positive situations.
- Staff must not attend work if they have a fever or symptoms of a respiratory illness. If they think they may have COVID-19, they should stay home, take a rapid antigen test or get a PCR test, contact a doctor or call the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080. Staff should stay home if sick in the first instance and notify their planner when they are unable to complete a shift.

4. Training

- All staff at Neighbourhood Care will be trained to work in the safest and most effective way for environments where community transmission occurs.

- All staff required to use PPE must be trained. This training includes when to use PPE; what PPE is necessary; how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE; how to properly dispose of or disinfect, inspect for damage, and maintain PPE; and the limitations of PPE.
- Staff are required to complete the Department of Health’s Infection Control Training prior to working with clients and families and attending team meetings or working from head office.

5. More Information

Additional information can be accessed at the related documents area of this policy. All staff will be trained in the use of this policy and the supporting documents including the Emergency and Disaster Management Plan.

End of document
