

Do you have patients in an aged care facility?

This tip sheet has been adapted from North Western Melbourne PHN. It incorporates the expertise of a range of stakeholders including Professor Michael Murray, the head of the Australian Government's Victorian Aged Care Response Centre, Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and our new Aged Care Expert Advisory Group chaired by Dr Jagdeesh Singh Dhaliwal.

It outlines best practice guidance and learnings from the Victorian experience with COVID-19 for consideration in your own planning.

Key actions for GPs: CHECK ALL CONTACT DETAILS and ONSITE VISITATION:

<p>CHECK that the RACF has your details</p>	<p>Make sure the RACF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has accurate contact numbers and details for you, your practice and after-hours contacts; and • they are stored with the RACF's COVID-19 Outbreak Management plan.
<p>CHECK the RACF has a list of your patients</p>	<p>Keep an up to date list of the residents you care for at each site, and make sure that the site also has a list of the residents you care for.</p>
<p>CHECK the contacts you have for the RACF and in reach service.</p>	<p>Refer to the RACF's governance chart. Ensure you know who is in charge and how to contact them. This may be a facility manager or a nurse manager. Check you have contact information for the local hospital in-reach team and understand the likely escalation points:</p> <p>Darling Downs AGES Team:</p> <p>P 07 4616 6671 F 07 4616 5007 E DDHHS-AGES@health.qld.gov.au</p> <p>West Moreton RASS Team:</p> <p>P 07 3810 1530</p>
<p>ADVISE RACF if you will visit during COVID-19</p>	<p>Advise the RACF whether you are willing to continue to visit the site in appropriate PPE in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.</p> <p>If you are visiting multiple RACFs, then unaffected RACFs may be unwilling to have you onsite if you are delivering services into a facility where there is an active COVID-19 outbreak.</p>

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**Local Integrated
Primary Health Care**

Key actions for GPs: REVIEW YOUR PATIENTS' CLINICAL RECORDS

REVIEW the patient's clinical details	<p>Ensure patients clinical summary and details including next of kin are up to date and could be used as a handover summary.</p> <p>Have you considered uploading a Shared Health Summary to My Health Record?</p>
REVIEW goals of care and care escalation	<p>Review goals of care and care escalation for each of your patients in the RACF.</p>
REVIEW the patient's ACP	<p>Review Advance Care Plans for all patients. Discuss plans for what would happen to a resident if they were to contract COVID-19.</p> <p>Please fax updated Advance Care Plan to:</p> <p>Office of Advance Care Planning</p> <p>P 1300 007 227 F 1300 008 227 E acp@health.qld.gov.au</p>
REVIEW the patient's drug charts and prescriptions	<p>Review the drug charts; make sure prescriptions are up to date. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring all prescriptions have at least a 7-day supply remaining; AVOID ALL NEBULISERS due to the increased risk of transmission of COVID-19 through droplet spread; anticipatory medications for palliative care needs; consider RMMR annually; and review HealthPathways for the latest local clinical guidance for RACF resident care.
REVIEW the patient's immunisation record	<p>Ensure that flu vaccinations are up to date.</p>

Key actions for GPs: MANAGE YOUR RACF PATIENTS

PROVIDE continuity of care	<p>Maintain continuity of care through face to face care or by telehealth. COVID-19 MBS telehealth items can be claimed, see mbsonline.gov.au (news, COVID-19 telehealth MBS items). The PHN and HHS have been working with the local RACFs to increase their capacity to provide telehealth consultations.</p>
CHECK infection and PPE Plan for visiting the facility	<p>If you will be attending a RACF, always undertake best practice infection control and PPE requirements. Check for updates on PPE requirements at the Queensland Health PPE webpage and your local RACFs policies, and practice donning and doffing your PPE. Consider having someone observe you to make sure you're doing it correctly.</p>
ACCESS to clinical advice and COVID-19 information	<p>If you have any COVID-19 specific questions, contact your relevant Public Health Unit:</p> <p>Darling Downs Public Health Unit</p> <p>P 07 4699 8240 (business hours) P 07 3646 1699 (after hours)</p> <p>West Moreton Public Health Unit</p> <p>P 07 3818 4700 (business hours) P 07 3176 2111 (after hours, ask for public health)</p> <p>Darling Downs HealthPathways and West Moreton Health Pathways also has regularly updated pages on assessment and management of COVID-19 patients.</p>
CONNECT and communicate with families	<p>Contact and be a portal of information for families. Consider having a video conference for several families or all the families of your patients from the one facility at the same time for rapid sharing of information and to allay anxiety.</p>

Key actions for GPs: MANAGE COVID-19 in your PRACTICE and the RACF

PLAN for surge capacity	<p>Plan for surge capacity amongst your colleagues, if possible, in discussion with nursing staff. Consider forming a group where one (or more) GPs continue to visit the site if others need to self-isolate. The visiting GPs can perform any tasks that can't be undertaken via telehealth.</p> <p>Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN will assist by facilitating joint meetings between GPs, RACFs and local hospital in-reach</p> <p>We ask that any practices that care for patients in RACF nominate a COVID RACF lead to attend these virtual meetings to ensure that all practices are represented. Nominate your COVID RACF lead to practicesupport@ddwmphn.com.au so that an invite can be arranged.</p>
New staff and management	<p>Usual RACF staff maybe quarantined and replacement staff in place may not know the residents, their medical care needs or care wishes. Consider clinical handover processes as required to ensure continuity of care.</p>
Communication difficulties	<p>Consider having alternative contact details for nursing staff, the facility, residents or family as you may experience difficulties communicating during an outbreak.</p>

Before you go, please consider subscribing to our COVID-19 alerts for general practices (if you haven't done so already) which will help keep you on top of the rapidly changing situation. Please email communications@ddwmphn.com.au to be added to the email list.

For specific enquiries around COVID-19 for your practice, please contact practicesupport@ddwmphn.com.au