



# Aboriginal Sector Communication Update

**Tuesday 14 July 2020 14:00 Hours**

This regular statewide communication update is to keep health professionals abreast of the state-wide resources that have been developed by the Department of Health for the Aboriginal community and health professionals for COVID-19.

## COVID-19 Case numbers

- As of **14 July** 2020, there are **636** confirmed cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **606** people have recovered.
- To date **209,567** 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

- **60 cases** (0.8%) of all **7,491** Australian positive cases notified in the National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (NNDSS) were Aboriginal people (an increase of **1** case from the last update),
- **7** Aboriginal positive cases (**12%**) were admitted into hospitals, compared to **1,136** persons (**15%**) of all positive cases.
- Of the total of **60** Aboriginal positive cases, **30** persons (**50%**) acquired their infections from overseas, while **30** persons (**50%**) acquired the infections locally, compared to **4,620** persons (**62%**) and **2,795** persons (**38%**) of all positive cases respectively.
- Of the total of **30** (**50%**) Aboriginal persons who acquired infections locally, **20** persons (**33%**) acquired the infection in the major cities, **6** persons (**10%**) acquired the infection in the outer regional area and **4** persons (**7%**) acquired the infection in inner regional areas. There were no reported cases who had acquired infection in the remote and very remote areas, and there were no deaths among Aboriginal positive cases.
- The median age of Aboriginal positive cases remains at **33** years compare to **46** years for all positive cases.
- The completeness of Aboriginal identification fields in the NNDSS remains at **95%**.

## Latest Updates

### Phase 1 Campaign refresh

The Department of Health is re-releasing phase 1 campaign messages to ensure that communities continue to engage in good hygiene practices and physical distancing with the easing of restrictions.

The Mary G TVCs that focus on good hygiene and physical distancing will re-run across Aboriginal media.

Radio advertisements that focus on good hygiene, what do to if you are unwell and physical distancing, will be played across Aboriginal media.

## Phase 5 of WA roadmap pushed back

With the introduction of Phase 4 on 22 June, Western Australia's COVID-19 restrictions have been relaxed even further.

However, based on the latest health advice Phase 5, which was due to be implemented on 18<sup>th</sup> July, has been pushed back to a tentative date of 1 August. A final decision will be made in two weeks' time.

Western Australians must keep up physical distancing where possible and maintain good personal hygiene to better protect themselves and the general health of our community.

More information COVID-19 roadmap can be accessed - WA Roadmap <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/covid-19-coronavirus-wa-roadmap>

## Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) statement on recommendations for managing of health risk as COVID-19 measures lift.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people living in remote communities are at greater risk from COVID-19. This is because there are higher rates of other health issues in these communities and it can be harder to access health care.

The following link provides information from the Australian Government on managing health risks with easing of restrictions – <https://www.health.gov.au/news/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc-statement-on-recommendations-for-managing-of-health-risk-as-covid-19-measures-lift>

## DETECT schools' program

The school research project forms part of the [DETECT program](#). View the complete list of participating schools [here](#).

To date 4,499 tests have been performed on school staff and students with no positive cases.

## Victoria Exemptions

From midnight Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020, Western Australia's border with the east has been hardened. Exemptions for people travelling from Victoria have been tightened.

No one will be allowed in if they have been in Victoria in the previous 14 days - unless they fall into the new, even tighter list of exemptions. The number of exemptions is expected to be reduced significantly.

(Insert link)

## Aboriginal COVID-19 Resources

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

The aim of providing culturally-appropriate communications is to also 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
- Ensuring consistent, accurate and timely communication based on the official public

health messages and health information issued by the Chief Health Officer from the Department of Health

- Referring to the Department of Health COVID-9 website for up-to-date information

**Health services are welcome to localise Department of Health 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.**

*New resources (in development)*

- **Essential Health Tips for Travellers**
  - Preparing for travels
  - Staying well on my travels

## Resources for more information

### WA Department of Health – Aboriginal Sector

- **Aboriginal sector communication updates**
  - Communication update #4
- **Aboriginal health professionals**
  - Aboriginal ethical position statement
  - Video - 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 professionals (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**
  - Information flyer for Aboriginal people – what you need to know
- **Posters**
  - Good hygiene
  - Social distancing
  - Symptoms and what to do if unwell
  - Stay strong when you are sick
  - Visit your doctor
- **Video/radio messages**
  - TV commercial – Good hygiene with Mary G
  - TV commercial – Social distancing with Mary G

- Video - Beating the bugs, colds and viruses
- Radio – Protect yourself and other with good hygiene
- Animation 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)

## 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)
- 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 **14 July 2020**

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

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