

NIHRACS Weekly Update

Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment

If you were in isolation because you tested positive for COVID 19 or were a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID 19 or cared for a child who tested positive for COVID 19 or they were a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID 19 and you were in paid employment, and was likely to have worked during these dates, have no appropriate leave payments left and are not receiving an Australian Government income support payment, you may be eligible for the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment. You can also claim if you were caring for a person with a disability or severe medical condition who were directed to isolate.

Please go to <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/em252>

This link will take you to the claim form to check your eligibility for the payment or alternatively present to the Services Australia Hub at the Professional Centre on Taylors Road.

Or go to www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/covid19

Within the guidelines to the application, you will require proof of residence, proof of employment, evidence of instructions to quarantine or isolate and proof of a positive test result for COVID 19 for you or the person you were caring for. The evidence of a positive COVID 19 test and direction to isolate needs to be from a health professional.

Currently NIHRACS are preparing an official letter that will provide the required medical evidence so Norfolk Island residents who were adversely affected due to COVID 19 isolation requirements can apply for the payment. These letters will be sent to all residents who were placed into quarantine or isolation.

Advice to Norfolk Island Residents and Visitors regarding novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

COVID -19 (novel coronavirus) continues to spread across Norfolk Island.

While this is a serious public health issue, it is important to keep in mind that the disease mainly causes mild respiratory illness. It is, however, necessary for us to try to limit spread of the virus on the island.

NIHRACS encourages all community members to ensure that you follow infection control measures, which include hand and respiratory hygiene, and to use face-masks in the community.

At present NIHRACS considers every person who has fever or acute respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) to be at risk of having the virus. Also considered at risk of having coronavirus is any person who was in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

If these criteria apply to you, you should not attend work, school or go out into the community. Call the hospital on 22091 for advice. If you are exhibiting symptoms the GP may request a coronavirus rapid antigen test. These swabs are conducted at the drive through testing tent at NIHRACS. You will be advised to self-isolate at home or your accommodation until a negative test result is received. Should you become very ill and require medical care, please call the hospital on 22091 or an ambulance on 000. You will be seen in the hospital's separate viral assessment unit.

The elderly and patients with chronic diseases are most at risk of complications not only from this coronavirus but also from other viruses like influenza. If you are ill, be particularly mindful of avoiding the spread of infection when visiting relatives and friends.

NIHRACS strongly advises people to have the COVID vaccination to help prevent the spread.

This is an evolving situation and advice concerning the Health response is being regularly reviewed.

International Women's Day Event and Visit by Experts in Body Image and eating Disorders

The Health and Wellbeing team are working with The Women's Advocacy Group of NI (WAGNI) to organise a Community event for International Women's Day (IWD) and, together, we are bringing over A/Professor Sarah Maguire and Dr Karen Spielman from the Inside Out Institute (<https://insideoutinstitute.org.au/#gsc.tab=0>) based at Sydney University. This is a National Institute involved in Research, Clinical Innovation, Education and Public Policy in body image and eating disorders. See other information in this paper about the IWD event.

While on-Island they have kindly offered to run an education session for health and psycho-social professionals on clinical and other issues involved in supporting people affected by body image and eating disorders as well as sessions at the School and for parents.

For more information either contact Dale Howe from WAGNI on 56025 or Karen Innes-Walker on 53969.

Norfolk Island Dementia Support Carers Group

After the cancellation of our January meeting due to the COVID 19 outbreak, we will hold our first meeting for 2022 on Tuesday 22nd February. If you are a carer, friend or family member of a person diagnosed with dementia and would like to meet other carers, come along to our meeting.

Our meeting will be COVID safe, doors open if raining or sitting outside if the weather is fine, sign in register, hand sanitiser, participants wearing masks and sitting apart. We will have tea and coffee available but no food will be served. Please bring along your own morning tea.

The physical and emotional demands of caring for someone with dementia can be high. If you are caring for a person with dementia, you may also need support. It is easier to continue your care role if you take time out to recharge and gain reassurance by catching up with others who share similar experiences.

Where: St Barnabas Parish Centre

Date & Time: 22nd February 2022 at 10:30am

Please call the NIHRACS Social Worker Maria on 50593 or Glynn on 57566 for further information.

Dental Clinic at NIHRACS

COVID -19 has very quickly created a new normal, disrupting some routine as we have come to know it. While the implications of the pandemic for the community of Norfolk Island continue to change on a regular basis, your dental health continues to be important.

The Dental Clinic is open with limited services and determined on a case by case basis for the time being due to new protocols of dental treatments following COVID-19 (in line with Australian Dental Association).

We ask the members of the community to be patient with us and please call the dental clinic on 22910 about your dental concerns / situation before making an appointment and arriving unannounced at the dental clinic.

Thanking all for your understanding in regards to the above.

Accessing Health Care Services at NIHRACS

Due to the current restrictions due to the risk of COVID-19 the main entry to NIHRACS is currently locked however the General Practice clinic is still open for business for all your health care needs and our emergency department is still operating. To decrease the risk of COVID-19 our processes have changed and Medicare is providing funding for telephone consultations where our Doctors can provide their services without you having to present to NIHRACS. If you need to make an appointment to see a doctor at the GP Clinic, you will be required to have a COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test prior to entry.

If you have any of the following symptoms please telephone the GP Clinic for a phone consultation prior to presenting at the front door:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Chills
- Body aches
- Sore or scratchy throat
- Headache
- Runny nose
- Muscle pain
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Diarrhoea
- Loss of taste or smell

If the assessing Doctor decides you need further medical intervention they will inform you on what to do next. To book appointments please phone our reception on 24134. Please continue to help us to reduce the risks of coronavirus on our small community by taking advantage of our telehealth services.

If you require medical assistance outside business hours please phone the hospital on 22091.

In cases of emergency please dial 000.

Condoms available

The Health & Wellbeing office would like to advise that the Condom machines have been reinstalled and are now available to use. The machines are housed in the toilets behind the Commonwealth Bank/ CafeTempo, down Bun Pine Alley. The cost is \$2.00 for a box of 2 condoms, the machines will take a

\$2.00 coin only. A very special thank you to Paw Paw's Pumpshed & Norfolk Mall for having the condoms available while we sourced the boxes. Thanks also to NIRC for agreeing to have the machines reinstalled and to Doug Creek for installing the machines.

Heart Foundation Walking group is back

Put on your walking shoes, the walking group is back on. The group meets every Sunday at 8am near the Kingston pier (weather permitting). You are welcome to bring your dog and/or children and there are different walking distances to choose from. If you would like to join the group, just turn up. Remember to bring your hat, water, mask (only needed if in close distance with others outdoors), hand sanitiser and have sunscreen on. For more information contact the Health and Wellbeing office on 22687.

GP Clinic and Emergency Department Open for Business

The General Practice clinic is still open for business for all emergency health care needs and our emergency department is still running. However to decrease the risk of COVID-19 our processes of practice have changed and Medicare is providing us funding to continue practice by having telephone consultations where our Doctors can meet your needs without you having to present to NIHRACS. If the accessing Doctor decides you need further essential medical intervention they will instruct you on what to do next. To book appointments please phone our reception on 22091. Please continue to help us limit the impact of coronavirus on our small community by taking advantage of our telehealth service.

If you require any assistance with NIPTASS forms please call our social work on 50593 or the hospital 22091. Residents have up to 12 months to lodge their NIPTAAS claim so if the refund is not urgent please delay lodgment of forms during this period.

Stay safe everybody.

Hours of Operation

Monday- Friday 8.30am – 5pm

Please note the clinic is closed for lunch from 12.30 – 1.30pm.

Please call 24134 for appointments only during opening hours.

If you require medical assistance outside business hours please phone the hospital on 22091. In cases of emergency please dial 000.

All patient information is treated as confidential.