

Dear Family/friends and advocates

Re: What is Homeplace doing in relation to the Coronavirus

While COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is of concern, it is important to remember that most people who display symptoms (such as fever, cough, sore throat or tiredness) are likely suffering from a cold or other respiratory illness—not COVID-19.

The Department of Health advises that people most at risk of getting the virus are those who have recently been in in a high-risk country/region and people who have been in close contact with someone who has a confirmed case of coronavirus.

Nevertheless, we are aware that many HomePlace Participants are at greater risk than the general community if they contract COVID-19.

In order to manage the risk HomePlace has:

- Distributed an Easy English Guide for Participants on the Coronavirus. Staff can use the guide to have a conversation with participants about COVID-19. A copy of the resource is attached.
- Directed all staff to undertake *Supporting People to Stay Infection Free eLearning Module*. This module includes:
  - information about why many people with disability are more vulnerable to infection
  - key steps to prevent spreading infection and COVID-19 transmission
  - application of the NDIS Code of Conduct to infection control
  - information about the chain of infection and key modes of transmission
  - understanding risks and responsibilities in keeping people infection free
  - education about maintaining privacy, choice and control
  - interactive scenarios to test understanding in practice

Staff receive a certificate when the course is complete.

If you would like to know more about the training or undertake the free training yourself please follow the link:

<https://training.disabilityservicesconsulting.com.au/collections/all/products/infectionfree>

- Kept staff informed of their responsibilities and provided the latest information to staff from the Australian Department of Health. In particular we have provided staff with the flyer Coronavirus (COVID-19) information for Health Care and Residential Care Workers. This was last updated on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020
- Informed staff they must not come to work & they must isolate themselves for 14 days at home if they:
  - left, or transited through mainland China or Iran in the last 14 days,
  - been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus in the last 14 days,
  - if returning from Italy or South KoreaEmployees who are in isolation due to one of the above situations must alert Homeplace. If staff are aware that any of our participants meet the above criteria, they must inform HomePlace ASAP.

- Ensured we are up to date and monitoring information. Our sources of information are the State and Commonwealth Health Departments, National Disability Services Coronavirus Information Hub and the National Disability Insurance Agency. Please note we are not managing by general media due to misinformation.
- Reinforce staff and Participant hygiene practices, in particular:
  - Washing hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet
  - Covering the mouth when coughing and sneezing, disposing of tissues, and using alcohol-based hand sanitiser
  - If unwell, avoiding contact with others (i.e. touching, kissing, hugging, and other intimate contact)

If you have any queries, please feel free to email me at [dwharldall@homeplace.com.au](mailto:dwharldall@homeplace.com.au) or call the HomePlace Office on (08) 8445 9900.

Yours sincerely



Denice Wharldall  
Executive Director