

 Tasmanian Government	THIS IS AN ALERT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ALL DOCTORS IN THIS PRACTICE		
	Communicable Diseases Prevention Unit		
27 April 2020	No. of pages (incl. this page): 1	Phone: 1800 671 738	Fax: 6173 0821

## COVID-19 Update No. 42

This alert updates the 24 April 2020 COVID-19 ALERT.

### Testing

- **Statewide, please refer for testing ALL patients with ANY respiratory symptoms (including mild), including, rhinorrhea, fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath.**
  - For patients in the North West (or who have been in the NW in the last 14 days), close contacts of known cases, health/residential care workers, people living in residential facilities and others at moderate to very high risk (see the GP Info Sheet, V 14), refer to THS Respiratory Clinics for testing, for timeliness of results.
  - The mobile testing bus remains in Smithton.
  - Please continue to instruct all symptomatic patients tested for COVID-19 to isolate at home until results are provided and provide the 'I'm being tested' information sheet (V3, updated and attached) and facemasks.
  - Asymptomatic workers in the North-West who have regular interactions with the public, eg healthcare workers, retail staff and police officers, are being encouraged to seek testing. Asymptomatic members of the public can also be tested but this is not encouraged. Asymptomatic people being tested do not need to isolate unless they have been instructed to by PHS, and do not need to be managed as suspect cases.
  - Currently clinical management of all COVID-19 cases in the community is through GP Assist working closely with Public Health Services (PHS). Patients are encouraged to maintain contact with their usual GP for ongoing management of chronic conditions and non-COVID-related medical issues, and are advised to inform their GP that they are COVID-19 positive.
  - Please do not release COVID-19-positive patients from isolation. This process is managed by GP Assist and PHS using national guidelines. PHS will write to patients to tell them when it is safe to leave their place of isolation.
  - **Only release from isolation patients who have negative results who have not previously tested positive and who have not been told by PHS to quarantine (eg close contacts, returned travellers).**
  - Free nicotine replacement therapy and support is now available to help people in quarantine in Tasmania who smoke. Registration and distribution is through the Quitline.
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- The North-West remains a designated localised area with risk of community transmission.
  - Four cases were diagnosed yesterday, all in the NW, including three from Smithton.
  - As at 6:00 pm 26 April 2020, there have been 212 cases confirmed in Tasmania (140 in the NW) and 11 deaths (10 in the NW). There are 349 close contacts in quarantine being monitored, of which 216 are staff of health and aged care facilities in the NW.
  - Please continue to provide negative test results to patients you test or refer for testing.
  - Primary Health Tasmania has launched a 'Keep your health on track' campaign, encouraging people to continue GP appointments.
  - The fact sheet 'I'm being tested, what do I need to know' has been updated (attached).
  - The 'open times' for some THS Respiratory Clinics have changed. See updated Regional Testing Clinics (attached).
  - The Australian Government COVIDSafe app has been launched to support rapid contact tracing. For more information, go to [www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covidsafe-app](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covidsafe-app)

### What to do:

- Use the **COVID-19 GP Info Sheet V14 (updated with clinical criteria added back in)** when assessing and managing patients with symptoms of COVID-19.

### Further information:

- For Tasmania: [www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au](http://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au) and [www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/facts/cases-and-testing-updates](http://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/facts/cases-and-testing-updates)
- For referral pathways/forms and general practice preparedness: [Tasmanian HealthPathways](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support, Dr Julie Graham, Specialist Medical Advisor, Public Health Services.

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