

 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		
2 May 2020	No. of pages (incl. this page): 1	Phone: 1800 671 738	Fax: 6173 0821

COVID-19 Update No. 46

This alert updates the 01 May 2020 COVID-19 ALERT.

- **Statewide, please test or refer for testing ALL patients with ANY respiratory symptoms (even mild), including rhinorrhoea, fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath.**
- **Testing options now include:**
 - **THS Respiratory Clinics** – see attached for locations. From Sunday, 3 May, the Burnie clinic will relocate to West Park, 'The Point', 10 Bass Highway. Opening hours will be 0830-1530. In Smithton, the mobile clinic is open Sunday May 3rd from 0830-1330 at the Smithton Leisure Centre (SWIRL), Nelson Street.
 - GP-led Respiratory Clinics – see PHT pathways for information.
 - GP-collected swabs and referral through normal procedures – if appropriate PPE and sampling equipment is available.
- For high to very high-risk patients please, for now and where feasible, continue to refer to THS Respiratory Clinics for testing, for timeliness of results.
- **For testing in aged care facilities of residents who meet criteria:**
 - Please call the **Sonic Healthcare (Hobart, Launceston, and North West Pathology) COVID-19 hotline** on **1800 570 573** (operating from 8am-6pm). After hours, please initiate appropriate precautions and call the following morning.
 - The ACF COVID-19 Collection Co-ordinator will arrange delivery of the required number of specimen collection kits, which include detailed specimen collection instructions, swabs and specimen transport bags to the RACF.
 - For facilities that are remote from the major centres (Hobart, Launceston and Burnie) a small number of specimen collection packs (2-3 depending on the size of the facility) will be provided to be on hand to facilitate urgent testing if required.
 - Follow instructions for specimen collection in suspected COVID-19 cases using appropriate PPE.
 - Complete the form with request for **'COVID-19, Influenza and other respiratory viruses'**. Please indicate on the form that the patient meets testing criteria for COVID-19 and include treating GP's details.
 - Transport of specimens to the laboratory will be arranged. The results will be phoned to the referring doctor and RACF RN. In the event of a positive test, CDPU will be in contact with further advice and a specialised COVID-19 collection team will be sent to the RACF to collect specimens from all residents and staff.
 - While awaiting test results, please ensure that you are following the infection prevention and control measures outlined in the national guidelines.
 - For testing in residential care facilities other than aged care, please follow site-specific protocols or call Public Health Services to discuss.

- The North-West remains a designated localised area with risk of community transmission.
- Please continue to provide negative test results to patients you test or refer for testing.

What to do:

- Use the **COVID-19 GP Info Sheet V15** when assessing and managing patients with symptoms of COVID-19.
- Provide patients being tested with the attached updated **'I'm being tested. What do I need to know?'** fact sheet.

Further information:

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

Table 1: Current high to very high-risk patients in Tasmania (for more details, see the GP Info Sheet V15)

Very high risk	1. Any patient with any clinical symptoms who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has had close contact with a confirmed case in the 14 days before illness onset. • travelled interstate in the 14 days before illness onset.
High risk	Any patient with clinical symptoms who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lives in aged care/other residential care facilities or group residential facilities (eg correctional facility, boarding schools) where there are two or more plausibly-linked people with clinical symptoms. 2. Living in or who has travelled through North West Tasmania in the 14 days before illness onset.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Dr Fay Johnston, Specialist Medical Advisor, Public Health Services.

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