



Aboriginal sector communication update #12

Wednesday 13 January 2021 15:00 Hours

This regular statewide communication update is to keep health professionals abreast of the state-wide public health messages and resources that have been developed by Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) for the Aboriginal community and health professionals for COVID-19.

In this update we provide a focus on the impact of COVID-19 on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people, and highlight a range of resources available to support this age group.

COVID-19 case numbers

- As of **13 January** 2021, there are **879** confirmed cases, **48** historical cases and **15** active cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **855** people have recovered from COVID-19 in WA. There have been **9** deaths from COVID-19 in WA.
- To date **672,939** COVID-19 tests have been conducted in WA.
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports](#) & [WHO Dashboard](#)

National COVID-19 Aboriginal epidemiological profile

Updates on COVID-19 among Aboriginal Australians, key insights **#13**, data as of **6th December** 2020:

- **0.52% (147 cases)** of all COVID-19 positive (confirmed) cases (**28,049**) notified in the Australian *National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System* (NNDSS) were recorded as Aboriginal people – (the cases remain unchanged from the last update with **one correction/adjustment**).
- Of the total **147** Aboriginal COVID-19 positive cases, **76% (112 persons)** acquired their infection locally, while **21% (31 persons)** acquired their infections overseas, and **3% (4 persons)** acquired their infections from interstate.
- Of the total **112** Aboriginal persons who acquired their infections locally, **80% (90 persons)** acquired the infection in a major city, **14% (15 persons)** acquired the infection in an inner regional area, **5% (6 persons)** acquired the infection in an outer regional area, **4% (4 persons)** acquired the infection from interstate and **1% (1 persons)** acquired the infection in a remote area.
- Of the **31** Aboriginal people who acquired the infection overseas (including one case from WA), **45% (14 persons)** were linked to cruise ships.
- Since July 2020, there have not been any new overseas-acquired cases notified in the NNDSS, while no new locally-acquired cases recorded in the NNDSS after September 2020
- **11% (16 cases)** of Aboriginal cases required hospital admission, while **89% (131)** required quarantine/isolation. **No deaths** were recorded among Aboriginal positive cases.
- The median age of Aboriginal positive cases is **31** years; compared to **37** years for non-Aboriginal people.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), as at **6 January 2021** there are around **235** SARS-CoV2 or COVID-19 candidate vaccines (an increase of **33** candidate vaccines from the

last update) being developed across the world with total of 63 candidate vaccines (an increase of 16 candidates from the last update) are already progressed into Phase 1, 2 or 3 of clinical trials.

Latest updates

Concerns about the new UK COVID-19 variant

The key messages concerning the new COVID-19 strain:

- The WA Government has put tighter border measures in place to protect our community from the transmission of the virus.
- The UK variant has not yet entered the WA community. Although the UK variant has been detected in overseas travellers, they are all situated in hotel quarantine.
- Daily saliva tests will start for WA's quarantine workforce on top of existing PCR testing
- International arrivals cap will be halved to around 512 people a week until mid-February
- Masks will be made mandatory on international, domestic and intrastate flights and to be worn at all times in airports

This is a strong reminder that COVID-19 is not over yet and we must continue to stay COVID safe. We cannot afford to become complacent, it is still important for all of us to maintain strong vigilance, get tested if symptoms develop, and remain in self-isolation until a negative result is received.

COVID clinics

If you are presenting to get tested at a COVID Clinic, there may be delays and increased waiting times as a result of the extra testing being done for returned travellers. Please be mindful of the heat and take water and a hat. Our elders and disabled community members will be made priority.

- For all testing locations in WA: https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/COVID-clinics
- Find out: [Where to get tested for COVID-19 in regional and Remote WA](#)

Queensland border

Any person who entered Western Australia after 12.01am on 02 January 2021 but before 12.01am on 09 January 2021 and has been in Queensland after 12:01am on 02 January must:

- self-quarantine in suitable premises effective immediately as announced on 08 January 2021 and remain in self-quarantine for 14 days after arrival into WA;
- present for a COVID-19 test within 72 hours of entering self-quarantine (before 12:01am Tuesday 12 January);
- present for a COVID-19 test as soon as any symptoms develop;
- present for a test on Day 11 after arrival in WA (with Day 0 being the day of arrival in WA).

Any person who entered or wishes to enter Western Australia after 12.01am on 09 January 2021 and has been in Queensland:

- after 12.01am on 02 January 2021; and
- within the 14 days prior to the time the person enters WA,

will only be permitted to enter WA if they are an exempt traveller and, unless directed otherwise, must:

- self-quarantine in suitable premises for 14 days;
- present for a test for COVID-19 on arrival at Perth Airport or otherwise within 48 hours of their arrival;
- present for a further test on Day 11 after arrival in WA (with Day 0 being the day of arrival in WA).

If you have been a close contact of a recent Queensland arrival, you do not need to self-quarantine but must get tested for COVID-19 if symptoms develop. More information can be found [here](#) and Interstate Border Controls [here](#). Queensland travellers fact sheet can found [here](#).

You can find the 'Information for your quarantine stay' brochure [here](#). Self-quarantine in WA factsheet [here](#).

The Queensland Government has put restrictions in place in Greater Brisbane to sure the virus is not circulating in the community. COVID-19 Queensland Government Restrictions homepage found [here](#).

Victorian travellers

Any person who entered Western Australia after 12.01am on 21 December 2020 but before 12.01am on 01 January 2021 and who had been in Victoria after 12:01am on 21 December must:

- self-quarantine in suitable premises for 14 days after arrival in WA, effective immediately as announced on 31 December 2020;
- present for a COVID-19 test as soon as any symptoms develop;
- present for a test on Day 11 after arrival in WA (with Day 0 being the day of arrival in WA).

Any person who enters Western Australia after 12.01am on 01 January 2021 and has been in Victoria:

- after 12.01am on 21 December 2020; and
- within the 14 days prior to the time the person enters WA,

will only be permitted to enter WA if they are an exempt traveller and, unless directed otherwise, must:

- self-quarantine in suitable premises for 14 days;
- present for a test for COVID-19 on arrival at Perth Airport or otherwise within 48 hours of their arrival;
- present for a further test on Day 11 after arrival in WA (with Day 0 being the day of arrival in WA).

Arrival into WA from Victoria is only permitted for travellers with a [G2G PASS](#) exemption. More information for Victorian arrivals found [here](#).

NSW travellers

Any person who entered Western Australia after 12.01am on 18 December 2020 and prior to 12.01am on 20 December and who had been in NSW or had direct contact with a person who has been in NSW after 12.01am on 11 December 2020 (or, for completeness, direct contact in the last 14 days with a person who has been in South Australia or outside of Australia in the last 14 days) must:

- self-quarantine in suitable premises for 14 days;
- present for a further test on Day 11 after arrival in WA (with Day 0 being the day of arrival in WA).

Any person who entered or wishes to enter Western Australia after 12.01am on 20 December 2020 and has been in NSW:

- after 12.01am on 11 December 2020; and
- within the 14 days prior to the time the person enters WA,

will only be permitted to enter WA if they are an approved traveller and, unless directed otherwise, must:

- self-quarantine in suitable premises for 14 days;
- present for a test for COVID-19 on arrival at Perth Airport or otherwise within 48 hours of their arrival;

- present for a further test on Day 11 after arrival in WA (with Day 0 being the day of arrival in WA).

Arrival into WA from NSW will only be permitted for travellers with a [G2G PASS](#) exemption. More information for NSW arrivals found [here](#).

Mappa Platform

On the 25th November 2020, the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) launched the Mappa Platform. Mappa is a free-to-use online tool (found [here](#)) which provides comprehensive, culturally appropriate and reliable health service information for metro, regional and remote communities in WA. The website also showcases COVID-19 updates from the health sector, including PHEOC.

COVID-19 vaccination program

WA Health has created a [new webpage](#) on the corporate site for the latest updates on the WA Health COVID-19 vaccination program. The page includes a link to the Australian Government's [COVID-19 vaccines hub](#) which now outlines the *COVID-19 National Vaccine Rollout Strategy* released on 7/01/2021. The strategy indicates that the first vaccinations (Phase 1a) are to be administered from mid to late February 2021. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged over 55 years will be included in Phase 1b, with people aged 18-54 years of age included in Phase 2a. Stay informed and subscribe [here](#) for WA Government updates and [here](#) for Australian Government updates on the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination program.

SafeWA

So far, the uptake of SafeWA by venues and individuals for contact tracing has been impressive, however the use of registers must continue to be maintained. In addition to using contact registers, it is also important the WA community continues to practice COVID safe behaviours (physical distancing, washing hands and sanitising, staying home if unwell and to get tested). More information about the SafeWA app can be found [here](#).

South Australian border

On further public health advice, WA's border with South Australia was safely adjusted to permit travel into WA (via air or by road). Any travellers arriving from South Australia after 12.01am December 25, 2020, will be able to enter WA under the controlled interstate border's 'very low risk' category. Travellers must obtain a [G2G PASS](#), undergo a health screening at the airport or WA's border checkpoint and will not be required to self-quarantine. More information about WA's controlled interstate border and other useful information on travel requirements can be found [here](#).

Phase 1 campaign refresh

The Department of Health is re-releasing the phase 1 campaign to remind communities continue to receive COVID-19 prevention messages of good hygiene practices and physical distancing, over the summer months. The Phase 1 radio messages have now been completed and will be broadcasted across Indigenous radio stations in WA. Links to the radio messages can be found [here](#). Visiting family poster. Planning a trip poster.

Priority COVID-19 health messages for Aboriginal people

Aboriginal health professionals and sector representatives are encouraged to promote and reinforce the following key messages to Aboriginal clients and community. Remember to:

- continue to physical distance where possible
- continue to practise good hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- stay at home if unwell and rest to stay strong

- if unwell with flu-like symptoms, get tested (make sure to self-isolate until you receive your test result)
- make sure your family gets the flu vaccine
- keep attending your regular health checks, especially for chronic illnesses
- download and keep the [SafeWA app](#) active on your phone
- look after your mental health and social emotional wellbeing during this time.

Statewide Aboriginal resources

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

The aim of providing culturally-appropriate communications is to increase awareness and 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
- Ensure consistent, accurate and timely communication is provided, based on the official public health messages and health information issued by the Chief Health Officer from the Department of Health.

Refer to the Department of Health COVID-19 website for up-to-date information

Health services are welcome to tailor and localise Department of Health COVID-19 Aboriginal resources to meet community needs.

**Please reference the Department of Health WA and contact PHEOC
(pheoc@health.wa.gov.au) for further information.**

In development

- COVID-19 Key Messages to be translated and recorded in language
- Incorporating Aboriginal Health Comms into the 13COVID helpline

New resources

- [Information for your quarantine stay \(updated\)](#)
- [Planning a trip?](#)
- [Visiting family?](#)

All resources for the Aboriginal Sector

[WA Department of Health – Aboriginal Sector](#)

- **Aboriginal sector communication updates**
 - Communication update #1
 - Communication update #2
 - Communication update #3
 - Communication update #4
 - Communication update #5
 - Communication update #6
 - Communication update #7

- Communication update #8
- Communication update #9
- Communication update #10
- Communication update #11
- **Communication update #12**
- **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
- **External stakeholder resources**
 - Resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and remote communities (Australian Government)
 - COVID-19 resource toolkit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professional (Indigenous Health/InfoNet)
- **Remote and rural planning**
 - COVID-19 resource toolkit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professional (NATSIHWA)
 - 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**
 - General COVID information to stay safe
 - Information flyer for Aboriginal people – what you need to know
 - Information for a confirmed case
 - Information for a close contact of a confirmed case
 - **Information for your quarantine stay**
 - Self-isolation information after testing for COVID-19
 - Where to get tested for COVID-19 in Regional and Remote WA
- **Posters**
 - Poster – Essential tips for travellers
 - Poster – Personal hygiene
 - Poster – Physical distancing
 - **Poster - Planning a trip?**
 - Poster – Stay strong when you are sick
 - Poster – Staying well on my travels
 - Poster – Symptoms and what to do if unwell
 - **Poster – Visiting family?**
 - Poster – Visit your doctor
- **Video/radio messages**
 - Phase 4 update in English, Kriol, Martu, Ngaanyatjarra | Transcript (WA Government)
 - Radio – Physical distancing – let's work together to protect our mob
 - Radio – Protect yourself and other with good hygiene

- Radio – Stay at home if you are sick
- TV commercial – Good hygiene with Mary G
- TV commercial – Social distancing with Mary G
- Video - Beating the bugs, colds and viruses
- 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)
- **GPs and other support phone lists**
 - Goldfields
 - Great Southern
 - Kimberley
 - Midwest
 - Perth
 - Pilbara
 - South West
 - Wheatbelt

Getting tested for COVID-19

- **WA Department of Health COVID-19 Resources for Aboriginal people**
The WA Health Department has developed a suite of culturally-appropriate resources to support the Aboriginal community and health services in being COVID-19 safe and informed. They are found [here](#).
 - [COVID Clinics location in WA](#)
 - [Where to get tested for COVID-19 in regional and Remote WA](#)
 - [Self-isolation information after getting tested for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- **Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council**
QAIHC have been developing [culturally appropriate resources](#) to keep ACCHOs and their community informed and protected against COVID-19.
 - [How are you tested for COVID-19?](#)
- **Getting the COVID-19 test: Story books**
The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency has developed two easy-to-understand story books to help children understand what a COVID-19 test is and what will happen during the process.
 - [Getting the COVID 19 test at the testing station or hospital](#)
- **AHMRC's COVID-19 Testing Resources.**
The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of New South Wales has provided various resources on their website <https://www.ahmrc.org.au/coronavirus/> to support their member services across NSW during a COVID-19 outbreak and to minimise the impact on Aboriginal communities. Below are some resources on COVID-19 testing.
 - [Getting Ready for a COVID-19 Test](#)
 - [Do What's Best. Get a COVID-19 Test](#)
- **#swab4mob**
The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of New South Wales has initiated the #swab4mob campaign to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to get

tested and protect their families and communities by getting a COVID-19 test if they feel unwell. You can find a link to the video below.

- [#swab4mob campaign](#)
- **New South Wales COVID-19 Aboriginal Health Resources**
The NSW Government has developed a suite of COVID-19 resources to be used in the Aboriginal community. Some of resources includes information about getting tested if your unwell. These resources can be found [here](#).
 - [Just got Tested for COVID-19?](#)
 - [Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19](#)
 - [Important Sorry Business Information](#)

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 **13 January 2021**

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

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