Clinician alert #81 – all clinicians
Effective from 25 February 2022

New information
- New guidance is available to assist in managing a COVID-19 exposure in a healthcare practice setting.
- Resources providing advice for cases and contacts is now available on HealthyWA.
- There has been an unexpected wastewater detection in the shire of Kellerberrin.

COVID-19 guidelines for healthcare practices
- COVID-19 guidelines for healthcare practices in the community in a high and very high caseload environment are available at the ‘Transition policies and resources for healthcare workers’ page of the WA Health website.
- The guidelines advise on:
  o Performing a risk assessment after a COVID-19 exposure
  o Recommended healthcare worker furloughing policies
  o Management of cases and close contacts
  o Cleaning and potential closure of premises.

Case and close contact information
- With high case numbers of COVID-19 in the community, it is often quicker for cases to identify and inform their close contacts. WA Health may not be able to contact all close contacts directly.
- Factsheets outlining what to do when you test positive for COVID-19 and what to do if you are a COVID-19 close contact are available for cases and close contacts at HealthyWA.

Unexpected wastewater detection of SARS-CoV-2 in Kellerberrin
- Testing of anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 in Western Australia, including in the shire of Kellerberrin, is strongly recommended.
- Testing is available at Kellerberrin Memorial Health Service.

Testing criteria
- Testing criteria for SARS-CoV-2 has been updated.
- PCR remains the preferred test where laboratory capacity allows. If laboratory capacity is overwhelmed, testing via Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) can be used.
- People who are symptomatic and return a negative RAT result should be advised to have a PCR test while testing capacity is available.

Dr Sharon Nowrojee
PUBLIC HEALTH PHYSICIAN
STATE HEALTH INCIDENT COORDINATION CENTRE