



Director-General's COVID-19 UPDATE

Deidre Mulkerin | Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

Hello everyone

The most recent community outbreaks of COVID-19 have reminded us that we are not out of the woods when it comes to this highly infectious virus. I appreciate the many changes and workarounds you have put in place since March to ensure Queenslanders are able to access the services they need to keep safe.

With no community transmission currently, [Queensland's Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 restrictions](#) has been updated with details on what to expect as we move to stages 4, 5 and 6, which, if all goes to plan, will see us reach stage 6 by 1 December 2020. Understandably, moving through these stages will be subject to there being no unnecessary risks present, and that testing is widespread and there is no community transmission.

I recognise that keeping young people and staff in residential care services safe and well during a potential COVID-19 outbreak poses unique challenges. With this in mind, this month I have some updates on a new resource for residential care services and advice on new flexible work arrangements to ensure young people in residential care services will receive the care they need should they be affected by COVID-19.

COVID-19 residential care guidelines now available

The department has collaborated with PeakCare and other key stakeholders to develop the [Residential Care Services COVID-19 Guidelines](#).

These guidelines will help residential care providers and their staff prepare for scenarios relating to an outbreak of COVID-19. They will be revised as needed, to respond to changes due to COVID-19.

The guidelines are not intended to replace existing business continuity plans already in place but rather support providers to develop and/or refine their service continuity planning and responses.

If you have any queries, please contact your regional contract officer.

Individual Flexibility Agreements

There may be instances in the future where we will need to safely care for young people in residential care who have either been diagnosed with COVID-19 or need to self-isolate.

To enable residential care service providers to provide this care, Individual Flexibility Agreements (IFA) have been developed.

An IFA allows service providers to roster staff for extended shifts of 12 or 24 hours (by agreement with employees) in emergency situations where ordinary hours of work and shift patterns covered in the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 do not cover the types of health risks associated with COVID-19.

The Community Services Industry Alliance, PeakCare, the Services Union, Fair Work Commission and a number of representative residential care service providers have collaborated to prepare the IFA.

I encourage you to talk to your staff about their willingness and suitability to enter into an IFA, as part of early business continuity planning.

You can find more information about the IFAs on the [Community Services Industry Alliance website](#) or the [department's COVID-19 webpages](#) (under 'Staffing'). Please contact the Services Union for help with the IFA process.



If your organisation needs to activate an IFA, please [email us](#) for assistance.

Funding support for domestic and family violence services

I'm pleased that a number of local community-based service providers will share in almost \$5.2 million of additional COVID-19 related domestic and family violence funding.

This funding is from the Commonwealth DFV funding package and follows the \$7.5 million in Queensland Government contingency funding delivered to service providers at the start of the pandemic along with a previous \$5 million injection from the Commonwealth.

This latest contribution includes grants for intensive family support services and women's health and wellbeing services to support women post-crisis; service enhancements for organisations providing children's domestic violence counselling and domestic and family violence training for youth support services; an online perpetrator intervention trial; and affordable housing options for survivors of domestic and family violence.

Decisions are also being made about the allocation of the final tranche of Commonwealth DFV funding, with announcements expected in the near future.

Updated FAQs

Just a reminder that we are continuing to update the FAQs on our [COVID-19 webpage](#) as health directions and border restrictions change.

Thank you again for working with us to deliver these important services to Queenslanders.

Enjoy the long weekend.

Warm regards

Deidre Mulkerin

Director-General

Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women