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COVID-19 SERVICE UPDATES - 16TH APRIL 2020

ACCESS HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES

We are continuing to support the health and well-being of our community through the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, we have changed some of our services to protect the health of our clients, patients, staff and volunteers and to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

For detailed information on changes, please download this PDF [Information sheet](#)
Check back to this page – we will keep it updated.

We are calling our clients first. Before all appointments, we are calling clients & patients first. We are screening people for risk of COVID-19 as well as the risks and benefits of providing care in our clinic or in the clients home.

We are also screening our staff for their risk of COVID-19.

We are prioritising urgent care. To help prevent burdening the health system, we are prioritising clients and patients at high-risk of hospital admission. Our aim is to reduce the burden on tertiary health services and keep vulnerable clients and patients out of hospital.

We are using telehealth. Where possible and where it is clinically safe, we are offering clients and patients appointments via telehealth.

Clinical safety and privacy are our key priorities here.

ANGLICARE VICTORIA

Protecting young people, preventing harm and supporting our clients are essential functions for AV. This will never change, and we are always here to support you when you need it.

Vulnerable young people, families and individuals are more in need of help than ever during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Anglicare Victoria delivers services that keep communities safe and together across the state, and we have embraced new ways of working to minimise health risks to our staff, clients and carers.

During this difficult time, our teams are:

- Responding to requests from families dealing with unprecedented challenges, from family violence to family support.
- Providing advice and emotional support to those in financial difficulty through our social workers and financial counsellors.
- Taking in and providing safe homes for children in our residential and foster care.
- Helping with emergency food and aid for families.

- Supporting homeless and disadvantaged people with daily food distribution through our emergency relief centres.

The challenges of this crisis will last far longer than the next few months, but we will be there for the long haul to help those in need, whenever they need it.

You can contact Anglicare Victoria on 1800 809 722.

EACH

At this time, we are continuing to deliver the following range of essential services:

Allied Health: services for people with significant health compromises such as diabetes, pain, functional impairment or co-morbid conditions.

Medical/Nursing Services: services include certain sexual and reproductive health services as well as health services for vulnerable clients such as refugees, homeless, youth, people with mental illness or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other priority groups.

Dental: services are limited with a focus only on delivering emergency dental services. View full details [HERE](#).

Childcare: services will continue to operate as per direction from the Department of Health and Department of Education and Training (Vic).

Direct Support (NDIS & My Aged Care): direct support for essential services that include showering, hygiene, medication administration, meal preparation, feeding, dressing and other personal care requirements.

For all other types of support such as general community access, shopping, support for social gatherings, alternative arrangements to deliver support will be implemented that include phone welfare checks, shopping and delivery by a support worker and other phone based support.

Headspace: one-to-one services will continue to operate from our Knox, Narre Warren, Dandenong and Port Macquarie centres.

Residential Services: services will continue for our Drug and Alcohol Residential Rehabilitation services and our Youth Residential Rehabilitation (Mental Health) services.

Needle and Syringe Exchange Program: services will continue.

Clients will be contacted directly regarding any cancellations of appointments.

GROUPS ARE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED

To help reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading in the community, we are suspending all group programs until further notice.

We understand that many participants that attend our groups may be isolated and are vulnerable in this time of need, our dedicated teams will endeavour to keep in touch with clients and carers via telephone support.

Please follow our social media pages and our website as advice may change as the COVID-19 situation evolves.

For more information please contact our Service Access Team on 1300 003 224.

EACH AOD COUNSELLING SERVICES

We are providing telephone and Internet counselling. We are still offering afterhours on a Monday evening till 8. The SMART recovery group is still operating via online.

EASTERN COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE (ECLC)

Through the use of technology, ECLC continues to provide support and advice to our community, including:

- Client intake and referral
- Prioritised assistance for clients experiencing family violence, elder abuse or other vulnerability, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Intervention Order support at Ringwood Magistrates' Court
- Continuation of ECLC outreach services and specialised programs
- Contacting existing and/or upcoming clients to confirm appointments and explain new arrangements
- Working closely with legal assistance services and courts as they adapt to the crisis

Please note the following modifications to ECLC's service delivery:

- Closure of physical offices with staff working off-site
- Suspended night service
- Use of technology for appointments and meetings
- Partnerships and community development work to continue, adapting to the changing needs of our partners and community in relation to the impacts of COVID 19

EASTERN HEALTH MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The full suite of clinical services continues, with no change to access for referrals:

REFERRALS: Psychiatric Triage (24/7) on 1300 721 927

SERVICES: All Acute Inpatient Units, Case Management Teams, residential services (CCU and PARC) and Crisis Assessment & Treatment Teams (CATT) across CYMHS, Adult and Aged Services continue to provide direct face to face clinical care. To promote social distancing and reduce travel across the catchment we have introduced more telehealth (using DHHS endorsed 'Health Direct') across all streams where it's clinically indicated – essentially this is being used to augment face to face clinical assessment and treatment, and is primarily in place where consumers/carers are well known and can access the technology and connectivity required.

We are introducing some additional telephonic support for case managed consumers focusing on psychosocial support (food security, social distancing education, family support, medication security, occupational role idea generation during self-isolation, finance security) to be provided by our lived experience workforce and Towards Wellbeing (EIPSR) Support Workers.

We are hopeful the we can focus on shared care practice (by telehealth) during this period with primary and secondary care providers to provide well integrated care for our consumers.

EASTERN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE (EDVOS)

As a result of Australia's response to COVID-19, the demand is rapidly growing for our services that enhance safety, provide emotional support and material aid. The number of people reaching out to the assessment and response team has nearly doubled in the past few weeks. EDVOS are prepared for this increase and are keeping up with the demand, whilst also continuing strong levels of engagement with clients and no increase in waiting times. We continue to embrace new requirements in an innovative manner as well as implement responsible ways to provide continuous service delivery during these unprecedented times.

Deemed an essential service, our role is to continue to support the many women, including LGBTI+ communities, children and their pets, who are responding to any form of family violence, whilst also focusing on the safety and well-being of our staff. At this point in time we are maintaining a face-to-face service for women attending unexpectedly, women who explicitly request this, and for material aid provision. We are performing these duties with set COVID-19 risk assessment protocols in place for face-to-face interactions and outreach work, ensuring all required safety measures are taken. We are operating in-line with our sector's and department's expectations. Our clients, referral agencies and the broader community are thanking us for this. We will continue to monitor and respond to any new directives and keep you informed as to any changes to our delivery service. supported during this time.

As the demand continues to grow for our services, the number of people reaching out to the assessment and response team has nearly doubled. EDVOS are absolutely prepared for this increase in demand and continue to experience strong levels of engagement with clients. EDVOS are implementing flexible work arrangements so we can continue to provide family violence support services in a manner that is safe for our clients, staff and the community. EDVOS continues to offer services using telephone, text and attend anywhere software where necessary. We are very aware of the additional risks for those experiencing family violence during this time, and have added screening questions for COVID-19 to support our risk assessment and safety planning.

We continue to support the community with secondary consultations and co-case management via phone, email and teleconference facilities.

EDVOS continues to be available by phone (03) 9259 4200 or email: edvos@edvos.org.au opening hours are Mon-Fri 9am-8pm, Sat 9am-5pm. Closed only on public holidays.

EASTERN REGIONAL LIBRARIES

At Eastern Regional Libraries we have been working hard to keep bringing the library to you. As all the libraries have closed for visits, we are sending books, DVDs, magazines and audiobooks to your door via Australia Post. You can place a hold for any items in the library and we will mail it; or you can request our staff to put a selection together for you.

If you are not already a library member you can join online -

<https://www.yourlibrary.com.au/join-the-library/>

If you don't have access to the internet, just ring one of the libraries and the staff can join you up over the phone.

If you are a library member and have a device that you can read or listen to books on, we have purchased many more ebooks and eaudiobooks for you to enjoy.

Check out Libby - <https://erl.overdrive.com/> or BorrowBox - https://fe.bolindadigital.com/wldcs_bol_fo/b2i/mainPage.html?b2bSite=4470

Here are the telephone numbers for all the libraries in Yarra Ranges:

Belgrave - 9800 6489

Healesville - 9800 6497

Lilydale - 9800 6457

Montrose - 9800 6490

Mooroolbark - 9800 6480

Yarra Junction - 9800 6462

Our staff are available between 9am-5pm to answer your questions, get you joined up or help you set up your phone, tablet or computer to read or listen to ebooks.

GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

G.Ps are currently experiencing a reduction in consultation requests. It was suggested that this may be an opportunity to encourage consumers to have their more routine physical health checks performed.

HOMELESSNESS SERVICES UPDATE

The 5 homelessness entry points across the Eastern Region are still operating but their preference is for phone contact/appointments. If you have a consumer who is experiencing homelessness, is having issues with paying rent or has secured a new rental property and needs assistance with rent in advance please encourage them to call their nearest homelessness program for advice and assistance. DHHS have provided additional money to programs (HEF – Housing Establishment Fund and PRAP – Private Rental Assistance Program) to provide extra financial assistance in these areas.

Anchor (Yarra Ranges)	9760 6400
Uniting Wesley (Maroondah)	8870 4020
Community Housing Ltd (Whitehorse)	9856 0098
Uniting Harrison (Knox)	9051 3000
The Salvation Army (Boroondara)	9853 5680

The Victoria Government has re-purposed a number of aged care facilities to provide accommodation to any person experiencing homelessness who needs to self isolate or

recover from COVID-19. Additional pop up accommodation (motels) is also being provided for rough sleepers.

Residential crisis accommodation services are still operating under strict guides guidelines from DHHS around social distancing and hygiene procedures. At this stage it is not clear if any of the Winter Shelter Programs (emergency overnight accommodation provided by and in churches over the winter months) will be able to proceed in 2020 due to COVID-19.

INDEPENDENT MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY (IMHA)

Due to COVID-19, IMHA is now providing their services via phone.

IMHA are working together with Mental Health Services to ensure people on involuntary treatment order still have access to IMHA advocates /service and rights information during this time.

There will be virtual hospital outposts conducted fortnightly and for consumers who want non legal advocacy, this will be provided this via phone (IMHA can also tele-call into treating team meetings).

IMHA will be relying on Mental Health Services to inform consumers of IMHA and how they can access IMHA outside of the outpost day:

You can contact an advocate by:

- *Calling our intake line on 1300 947 820 during business hours*
- *Emailing contact@imha.vic.gov.au.*

Consumers can access helpful information by:

- *Calling 1800 959 353 (free call) to hear a recording of their rights (24 hours)*
- *Using our self-advocacy resources to speak up for their views and preference with mental health staff <http://www.imha.vic.gov.au/know-your-rights/self-help-tool>*

In partnership with VLA; SPOS; MHT; MHCC; OPA; MHLC; VMIAC and Tandem, IMHA has prepared the attached 'Useful Services' poster that has all of these services listed in the one place. We hope that this will assist consumers and carers to find services that can assist them (please see attached *Useful Services Poster*).

INSPIRO UPDATE

Essential services operating through our site at Lilydale, Belgrave site is closed. Limited onsite emergency counselling, emergency podiatry, physio, dental. Skeleton staff at the office, 65% staff working on home. Phone/Telehealth has been rolled out across the organisation this week using Teams. Parents doing a lot of referrals. Intake checking in on people. Difficultiies for transitioning staff to work from home and getting supported with necessary technology. Alternative work for staff (e.g. dental). How to work with other organization (Eastern Health YRC) opportunities to work together, staff concerns about their own health. Needing protective equipment (hand sanitizer). Groups on hold. Screening clients for telehealth as it is not a option for all clients. We are about to release our community update/website response. I will email it to you once we do.



DENTAL COUNSELLING

Emergency services only
e.g. those in significant pain
from a tooth infection,
abscess, swelling or trauma

Available via phone &/or
video call:

- General
- Youth & Family
- Drug & Alcohol
- Family Violence
- Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Available via phone
&/or video call:

- Children's speech therapy
- Children's occupational therapy



NDIS

NDIS appointments are
available via phone &/or
video calls

ALLIED HEALTH

Public and private appointments
available via phone &/or video call:



- Diabetes Education
- Dietetics
- Exercise Physiology
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Speech Therapy

LIMITED FACE TO FACE CONSULTATIONS AVAILABLE FOR ESSENTIAL, URGENT CARE ONLY

JOBCo.

Office opening days due to COVID-19 pandemic | We are still operating

For the safety of our clients and staff we have reduced our days of operation until further notice during the COVID-19 pandemic restriction period. Please see below the days of operation:

OPEN MONDAYS & THURSDAYS Brunswick, Fitzroy, Moorabbin

OPEN WEDNESDAYS Moonee Ponds

OPEN MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS FRANKSTON, NARRE WARREN

CLOSED BOX HILL, BROADMEADOWS, DANDENONG, HASTINGS, MORNINGTON, PAKENHAM, PRAHRAN, ROSEBUD, ST KILDA

KNOX CITY COUNCIL

Here is the Knox Council information <https://www.knox.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

Covers the services that are still running and those that are temporarily closed.

We have a COVID19 Community and Welfare Relief Services resource that is very helpful –

https://www.knox.vic.gov.au/files/Community/relief_services.pdf

My small team are working to support parents, carers and people with a disability by moving some of our groups, training and supports online.

Our e-Newsletter 'Accessing Knox' has a focus on supports and positive strategies and ideas for COVID19.

MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL

Maroondah Council continues to operate all Aged and Disability Services, albeit adapted as required:

- Regional Assessment Service:
 - Referrals via My Aged Care
 - Default assessment mode is telehealth (Zoom/telephone)
 - Face to face in-home assessments possible if client needs warrant that
- NDIS Coordinator:
 - Available for telephone, Zoom, Skype or face to face (if essential)
 - Supports any Maroondah community member with NDIS information, support, navigation, advocacy
 - Contact Maroondah Council 9294 5729
- Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services:
- Social Support Groups (Kerrabee):
 - Continues adapted, individualised program (not groups)
 - Door to door activity care packs delivered weekly
 - Doorstep welfare/social chat
 - Capacity to collect shopping (with a list)
 - Welfare and/or social telephone calls - including conference calls with other group members
 - Accepting new referrals via My Aged Care
- Delivered Meals:
 - Accepting new referrals via My Aged Care (or directly, if urgent) 9294 5729
 - Good capacity to increase number of clients
 - Delivery daily includes informal welfare check and capacity to follow up identified issues
- Occupational Therapy:
 - Accepting new referrals for 1:1 assessments and courses/groups via My Aged Care (or directly, if urgent) 9294 5729
 - Completing as much as possible via telehealth / telephone and completing essential tasks in the home
 - Buried In Treasures this 16-week course is currently running and adapted to using Zoom
 - BITS Peer Support (monthly supported, self-help group for people experiencing hoarding/over-acquiring behaviours) has adapted using Zoom
- Vulnerable Persons Coordinator:

- Continuing to support people at risk and requiring connection to service systems (typically referred through Vic Police, local laws, community health. Phone 9294 5729.

Importantly, Maroondah Council is planning for the formal Relief & Recovery responsibility (DHHS manage the crisis phase and announce when local government take over for the relief then recovery phases). We are interested in learning from organisations what actions are already implemented to respond to Maroondah Community needs due to COVID-19 and also what is planned. Council officers have been contacting many organisations to collect this background information and is also working on identifying community needs, gaps and evolving partnerships to respond to these in the relief/recovery phases. A Relief Coordinator is currently being internally recruited and should commence within the next 2 weeks.

MENTIS ASSIST

- During these unprecedented times of COVID-19, the ongoing safety and support of people remain a priority at Mentis Assist.
- While our emphasis is on non-face-to-face support for the foreseeable future, remote technology has provided staff with the tools to keep in regular contact with the people we support, whilst adhering to the strict rules surrounding social distancing and isolation, to minimise the risk to our community as a whole.
- As a result of COVID-19, some of our offices have been temporarily closed, however, many of our staff are working remotely and are continuing to provide support to people over the phone and through other forms of communication while remaining open for referrals.
- We understand that this change in the way we provide services has been significant and we continue to work with staff and the people we support, to ensure their individual mental health needs are being met and remain as flexible as possible under the circumstances.
- Together with providing the best service possible for the people we support, Mentis Assist is in regular contact with peak bodies, funding agencies and other community organisations to ensure we have a coordinated approach to support.
- While the circumstances we find ourselves in today have been a challenge, the overall community connectedness and support and understanding of all has helped to ensure that people continue to receive the services they need.
- We know that social distancing and isolation are key to reducing the impact of COVID-19, however, where possible it is important to keep in touch with friends and/or family by reaching out in other ways such as a phone call to ensure we remain connected during this time.
- Throughout this pandemic, Mentis Assist will continue to provide the best possible services with the wellbeing of the people we support, staff and the community remaining our focus.

MIND AUSTRALIA

Changes in place:

IN OUR OUTREACH SERVICE

Mind is continuing to support people in-person in our outreach programs.

We have:

worked with clients to ensure they have access to telephone and online technology to support virtual face-to-face engagement and telehealth interventions

maintained face-to-face contact for clients, who need in-person support

implemented physical distancing and safe universal infection and control practices.

IN OUR RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Mind-managed residential services are in full operation.

Mind staff are maintaining our rigorous hygiene procedures and working closely with our partners to ensure we have a supply chain of supplies and are prepared for any situation.

We have:

introduced temporary physical distancing measures to keep everyone safe and well while maintaining social connection

suspended formal group activities

temporarily limited visitors to essential services only

separated staff into teams to minimise staff-to-staff contact

set up fully furnished temporary accommodation, stocked with food and essentials in the event we need to support a Supported Independent Living client in self-isolation

put in place a system to check staff are well before they start work to reduce risk

put in place standby teams to maintain continuity of support in the event of any staff members contracting COVID-19

ensured clients are staying connected with friends and family, through phone calls and virtual catch-ups.

IN OUR MIND CENTRES

NDIS support services are continuing but we have temporarily closed our day service centres and suspended formal group activities to adhere to public physical distancing regulations.

People receiving outreach support services have been contacted by their support worker so they can discuss the best way to maintain their support during this period, including phone, or video conferencing if available.

All of these practices and our business decisions are informed by guidance from the Australian Department of Health, our partners, NDIS and World Health Organisation (WHO).

For general advice on COVID-19, please look at [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au) Changes in place:

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IN OUR MIND CENTRES

NDIS support services are continuing but we have temporarily closed our day service centres and suspended formal group activities to adhere to public physical distancing regulations.

People receiving outreach support services have been contacted by their support worker so they can discuss the best way to maintain their support during this period, including phone, or video conferencing if available.

All of these practices and our business decisions are informed by guidance from the Australian Department of Health, our partners, NDIS and World Health Organisation (WHO).

For general advice on COVID-19, please look at [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au)

If you been in contact with a Mind staff member or client and are unwell or have been exposed to COVID-19 please advise us by emailing healthsafetyandwellbeing@mindaustralia.org.au

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NEAMI NATIONAL

At Neami National and Me Well, continuity of support is always a priority. In response to the extraordinary circumstances across Australia, we are working to maintain support, while reducing risks to the people who use our services, our staff and the community.

As the pandemic is affecting regions in different ways, we are adjusting our response to meet local needs in consultation with our partners and funders. Prioritising local needs means that how we are responding might look different from one service to another.

In line with physical distancing recommendations, many staff are now working remotely, including providing support over the phone and using video platforms. While this has meant an adjustment to how we usually deliver support, we are maintaining regular contact with the people we support and continuing to be flexible in providing services.

Where services are delivering face-to-face support, we continue to practice physical distancing and good hygiene to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the people who use our services and our staff. If you, a loved one or someone you care for have questions about Neami or Me Well services during this time, please contact your local service as you usually would.

NDIS

In regards to updates with our service coordination due to COVID-19,

- We are not able to meet with NDIS participants face to face for meetings and are conducting them through our internal VC system and Microsoft teams.
- If someone walks in with an enquiry, we do have rooms that allow for us to meet with them and keep up with the social distancing restrictions etc.
- The NDIS is offering plan rollovers to participants who are ok with their current plan, have an upcoming NDIS meeting and don't need to meet with their Local Area Coordinator to conduct a review meeting. They get a copy of the same plan for 1 – 2 years.

There has been some changes in regards to technology that can now be purchased if it is reasonable and necessary for people who otherwise would not be able to access virtual support during this time. For example, if they can't meet face to face with their Psychologist and need to have a device to support them to maintain these meetings, they can purchase one through their NDIS plan funding.

UNITING PRAHRAN

- The HUB (St Kilda) is continuing to provide takeaway meals (hot lunch) to registered clients only (not currently taking new registrations)
- Hartley's Café is continuing to provide takeaway meals to clients (Prahran)
- Emergency Relief – still operating with a one in one out system

- Goodwill Shop – currently closed, however appointments can be made for urgent items
- Lifeline – significant increase in COVID-19 specific calls
- NDIS SC – service is being offered remotely
- Voices Vic are currently providing peer led phone support and online recovery groups for voice hearers to share their experience, connect with other community members, learn coping strategies and explore ways to grow and change their relationships with their voices.
- Voices Vic are offering online training via Microsoft Teams varying from 2 hour Introduction Workshops, to full day trainings on the Hearing Voices Approach for health professionals, support workers, family & carers and voice hearers. These trainings give an in depth understanding on tools and strategies to best support voice hearers.
- RESTART (Partnership with EACH) is continuing with some face to face support for clients
- Diversity Program – groups have been cancelled. Support is being providing via phone
- Scottsdale (residential service) only has essential services entering. Support is being providing via phone
- The Management and staff teams are attending weekly meetings via Microsoft Teams
- Staff are receiving regular communication from CEO Bronwyn Pike
- Intranet has extensive information, resources and support for staff
- Systems have been set up for reporting suspected / confirmed cases of COVID-19

WELLWAYS

Following advice from health authorities to protect the health and safety of our participants, our staff and the community Wellways is taking measures to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19. Non-essential and face-to-face services, programs and events are being cancelled, postponed or modified. Most staff are working remotely and offering individual and / or group support via phone and / or online platforms. Public access to Wellways offices will now be restricted to essential staff only and walk-in services are now suspended.

WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

Essential services operating as normal

- Hard rubbish
- Kerbside waste collection
- Whitehorse Recycling and Waste Centre
- Home and Community Services
- Council will also continue to provide our other services as much as possible, though our face-to-face customer service roles will be reduced.

- Customer Service Centres (Nunawading, Forest Hill and Box Hill) will be closed to visitors but will continue to provide services online via Council's website, phone or email
- [Child Care and Kindergarten](#) some closed and others open.
- Council Meetings: [Public submissions and questions](#) can be submitted online.
- [Immunisation](#) via booking system.
- [Maternal and Child Health](#) By appointment only. No drop-ins.
- [Sharps Containers](#) : collection or disposal by appointment and via rear of council building.
- [Youth Connexions](#): Drop-in service is closed. Support will still be provided to young people.
- All Smarter Living - now online

See below for a list of closures:

- Aqualink Box Hill and Aqualink Nunawading
- Box Hill Community Arts Centre
- Box Hill Town Hall including Artspace and community halls
- Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres
- Nunawading Community Centre
- Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex
- Sportlink
- Whitehorse Centre
- Whitehorse Manningham Libraries
- Morack Golf Course
- Skate parks
- Playgrounds
- Outdoor exercise equipment
- Community Nurseries
- Visitor Centres at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary and Yarran Dheran
- All events postponed

YSAS

While all programs continue to operate, community-based sites are closed to the public and clients (The exception is headspace Collingwood and Frankston who are working in accordance with advice from headspace National Office and the respective PHNs).

- Provision of signage indicating people that have symptoms of COVID-19 should not enter the building and provide contact details for assistance.
- All staff in community sites have the option of working in the office in accordance with strict social distancing and infection control measures or working from home according a rigorous working from home assessment as per YSAS policy. The completed working from home assessments are kept in a central register by the YSAS 'People and Capability' team.

- Counselling and casework services are being conducted by telephone or teleconferencing to facilitate remote service provision.
- All unnecessary work travel has ceased.
- All face to face meetings across the organisation are kept to a minimum and adhere to social distancing guidelines - supervision, case conferences and external meetings held by telephone or video conference.
- Relevant staff have been equipped with laptops and phones to ensure service continuity in the event of a site shutdown or partial closure due to Government direction or an incidence of COVID-19 infection.
- Unnecessary meetings with groups of people external to the organisation (i.e. training, seminars, and meetings) have been discontinued.
- Staff are directed not to attend any functions/social gatherings through work, including informal spontaneous congregations
- All organisational events involving a congregation of staff, clients or organisational stakeholders have been cancelled.
- YSAS Residential services has temporarily paused admissions until a new service model and set of procedures are developed that ensure that program sites, where young people and staff work and live in close proximity, are not putting anyone at risk of infection or inadvertently contributing to the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

SPECIFIC CUSTOMISED RESPONSES FOR CLIENTS AT THE HIGHEST RISK

A 'High Risk' register has been established based on a comprehensive risk assessment that identifies all clients across YSAS that require more support than can be provided through remote service provision. The decision on face to face contact to support clients is made on a case by case basis and guided by a customised care plan that document the specific social distancing and infection control measures in place to prevent virus transmission.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

YSAS Residential services remain operational but intensive redesign of the service model is currently underway.

- At present YSAS residential staff are reassigned to other therapeutic activities through remote contact with young people to ensure support remains.
- Residential services are coordinating with young people and referrers alternative treatment options and pathways as well as placement at other residential services taking admissions.
- On-line participatory rehabilitation programs are in development and nearing readiness for endorsement.
- A 1800 number has been established by which former, current and prospective clients (and their Carers) can receive support and guidance on the full 24 hour cycle.

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

All community programs are still accepting and responding to new referrals and each community site has a fully functioning duty system to ensure that all enquiries can be responded to in a timely manner.

In particular, open access day programs are still supporting clients over the phone who were connected tools that engage young people in on-line therapeutic activities are being developed.

To ensure that changes are implemented effectively:

- Our practitioners have contacted all clients to advise them of this change and assess their circumstances, including asking the YSAS COVID-19 screening questions.
- All Sites have notices in place to advise clients and potential visitors that our sites are not open to the public but that our service continues to operate.
- Telephone numbers are provided to guide clients and currently the diversion service to office phones for days when no-one will be on-site is being consolidated and a register kept. The diverted number is directed to the Manager/Team leader or nominee.
- Young people also have the option of the 1800 number being administered by Residential unit staff for 24 hour support and guidance.

HEADSPACE SITES & PROGRAMS

Headspace Sites remain open in a limited capacity and clear notifications are in place at the Collingwood and Frankston sites to instruct visitors on restrictions on entry to those with COVID-19 symptoms. All people seeking to attend on site are screened before being able to enter. Clients have been contacted to advise them of changes to service delivery arrangements.

SECURE WELFARE

Our Primary Health Service involving GP clinics, Nursing and an AOD response is primarily based on face to face delivery with staff continuing to deliver services on site. Our services are in-reaching to a DHHS controlled site and YSAS staff use the facilities provided. The service also includes after-hours on-call/re-call meaning YSAS provide a service to SWS to assist with admission requirements out of standard hours. This involves COVID-19 screening and care planning.

For the purpose of social distancing, DHHS have tightened up the admission criteria and plan to keep numbers in residence low.

Should DHHS close the site/program there is limited capacity for telehealth and remote service provision. Current efforts are in place to strengthen this option.

WEBPAGE UPDATES

Access Health and Community Services <https://accesshc.org.au/services/covid-19/>

Anglicare Victoria <https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/news/supporting-vulnerable-victorians-is-more-important-than-ever/>

Campbell Page <https://campbellpage.com.au/covid-19/>

Centrelink <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/affected-coronavirus-covid-19>

EACH <https://www.each.com.au/coronavirus-covid-19-update/>

Eastern Community Legal Centre <https://www.eclc.org.au/eclc-coronavirus-covid-19-update/>

Eastern Health <https://www.easternhealth.org.au/media-events/latest-news/item/1022-coronavirus-covid-19-information-hub>

ECADS (Eastern Consortium of Alcohol and Drug Services) <http://www.ecads.org.au/covid-19-update>

EDVOS <https://www.edvos.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/EDVOS-e-news-April-2020.pdf>

IMHA <https://www.imha.vic.gov.au/about-us/news/changes-to-service-due-to-covid-19>

Inspiro <https://www.inspiro.org.au/blog/wearehere>

Knox City Council <https://www.knox.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

Mentis Assist <https://mentisassist.org.au/>

MIND Australia <https://mindaustralia.org.au/resources/mind-services-covid-19>

Neami National <https://www.neaminational.org.au/news/continuity-of-support-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic/>

NEXTT <https://www.nextt.com.au/covid-19/>

Primary Care Partnerships - The well <https://thewellresource.org.au/in-practice/general-resources-and-tools/share>

Turning Point <https://www.turningpoint.org.au/covid-19-update/turning-point-covid-19-statement>

Uniting <https://www.uniting.org/healthupdates>

Wellways www.wellways.org

Whitehorse City Council <https://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/>

YSAS (Youth AOD and Headspace) <https://ysas.org.au/contact-us>