



# Aboriginal sector communication update #10

**Friday 13 November 2020 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 November 2020**, there are **783** confirmed cases, **38** historical cases and **14** active cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **760** people have recovered from COVID-19 in WA. There have been **9** deaths from COVID-19 in WA.
- To date **512,756** COVID-19 tests have been conducted in WA.
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports](#)

## National COVID-19 Aboriginal epidemiological profile

Updates on COVID-19 among Aboriginal Australians, key insights **#12**, data as of **25<sup>th</sup> October 2020**:

- **0.5% (147 cases)** of all COVID-19 positive (confirmed) cases (**27,582**) 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, **79% (115 persons)** acquired their infection locally, while **21% (31 persons)** acquired their infections overseas, and **one** case had an unknown source of infection.
- Of the total **115** Aboriginal persons who acquired their infections locally, **77% (89 persons)** acquired the infection in a major city, **13% (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 Organization (WHO), as at **3 November 2020** there are around **202** SARS-CoV2 or COVID-19 candidate vaccines (an increase of **9** candidate vaccines from the last update) being developed across the world with total of **47** candidate vaccines (an increase of **5** candidates from the last update) are already progressed into Phase 1, 2 or 3 of clinical trials.

## Latest updates

### Controlled interstate border

WA is set to transition into a new safe and sensible controlled border system this Saturday, 14 November. The transition will see the removal of WA's hard border and replacement with a health-informed controlled interstate border system to allow safe travel into WA.

The WA Health system is taking extra precautions with these changes and are working diligently to make sure our communities are prepared and COVID-19 safe. We are expecting an increase in interstate passenger arrivals to Perth Airport, including passengers arriving from very low risk and low risk states and territories. All interstate passengers will undergo health screening upon arrival to Perth Airport. COVID-19 testing will be available for those who fail the health screen or for those who wish to have one. More information can be found [here](#).

### Remote Aboriginal communities

Although WA's hard border will change on Saturday 14 November, restrictions for remote Aboriginal communities, under the WA Government Remote Aboriginal Communities Directions, will remain in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents.

More information on entering remote Aboriginal communities and exemptions is available [here](#).

### Phase 1 campaign refresh

In response to the upcoming transition to a controlled WA border arrangement, the Department of Health is re-releasing the phase 1 campaign to reinforce COVID-19 prevention messages of good hygiene practices and physical distancing for Aboriginal communities.

It is also important that our mob are receiving the appropriate key messages around COVID-19 to reduce anxiety or fear that may be occurring around the new border changes.

Radio advertisements that focus on good hygiene, what do to if you are unwell, and physical distancing will run across Aboriginal media.

The Department of Health WA is developing culturally-appropriate resources to encourage Aboriginal communities to stay COVID-19 safe during the summer. These will be uploaded to the Department of Health's website.

### 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 the [COVIDSafe app](#)

- 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](mailto:pheoc@health.wa.gov.au)) for further information.**

## New resources for the Aboriginal Sector

### In development

- Review and update of COVID-19 fact sheets and general information for Aboriginal people to stay safe
- Phase 1 refresh radio messages
- Staying COVID Safe in Summer resources

## All resources for the Aboriginal Sector

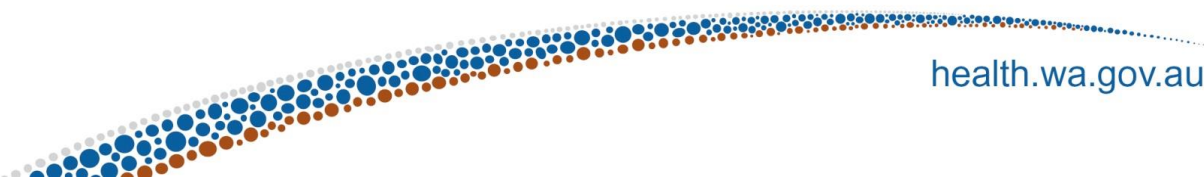
[WA Department of Health – Aboriginal Sector](#)

- **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**
- **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
- Information for Aboriginal people (HealthyWA)
- **External stakeholder resources**
  - Resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and remote communities
  - COVID-19 resource toolkit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professional (NATSIHWA)
- **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**
  - 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 low risk contacts 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 – Stay strong when you are sick
  - Poster – Staying well on my travels
  - Poster – Symptoms and what to do if unwell
  - Poster – Visit your doctor
- **Video/radio messages**
  - TV commercial – Good hygiene with Mary G
  - TV commercial – Social distancing with Mary G
  - Video - Beating the bugs, colds and viruses
  - Radio – Protect yourself and other with good hygiene
  - Video - Mary G telehealth and regular checkups
  - Radio – Physical distancing – let's work together to protect our mob
  - Radio – Stay at home if you are sick
- **Other resources available**
  - Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA)
  - Resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and remote communities (Australian Government)
  - Phase 4 Update available in Plain English, Kriol, Martu and Ngaanytjarra
- **GPs and other support phone lists**



- Goldfields
- Great Southern
- Kimberley
- Midwest
- Perth
- Pilbara
- South West
- Wheatbelt

## Elders and older people wellbeing during COVID-19

- **Wellbeing for Elders during COVID-19**  
The Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW has developed a toolkit focused on the wellbeing of Elders during the pandemic. It provides practical tips for Elders on how to take care of their mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic. It promotes the message that while spending more time at home can feel isolating and lonely, it can also be an opportunity to develop new skills, take care of yourself and stay mentally well and strong.
  - [Wellbeing for Elders during COVID-19](#)
- **COVID-19 community resources**  
Children's Ground, in collaboration with Arrernte families, have created a series of resources focused on ensuring that vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and families living in the NT are kept safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resources provide health and hygiene advice and social distancing information in both Arrernte and English languages and include culturally appropriate graphics. For easy readability and maximum visibility, each poster has been created using plain language on a bright yellow background.
  - [COVID-19 community resources](#)
- **Respect and protect our Elders poster**  
The Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (GRAMS) has created a [series of COVID posters](#), one of which focuses on Elders.
  - [Respect and protect our Elders poster](#)

## 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 November 2020**

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

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