

Community Engagement Noticeboard

14 October 2022







Changes to COVID-19 Pandemic Management

From 11.59pm on Wednesday 12 October, the Pandemic Declaration ended. Whilst most of the rules have gone, COVID is still a threat, especially to the more vulnerable people in our community. Protecting yourself is the best way to protect them. If you don't get COVID, you can't spread COVID.

Together our role is to keep our families, communities, and health workers safe by planning for and being prepared for future waves.

Things you can do to avoid getting COVID

The best way to protect yourself from COVID is to avoid getting COVID. Here are some of the things you can do to stay ahead:

 <p>Get vaccinated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccinations. Book your next dose at the GP or pharmacy and maximise your protection against the virus. Vaccination is the best way to prevent yourself from getting seriously ill.
 <p>Get tested</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid antigen tests are easily available and highly effective if you have symptoms. It is always a good idea to have some at home. Reporting is still mandatory for healthcare workers including in Aboriginal, hospital, aged care and disability care work, and those providing in-home care.
 <p>Wear a mask</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry a face mask with you when you go out. Face masks protect you by lowering the chance of catching and spreading the virus. Face masks are still <i>required</i> when visiting a hospital OR healthcare setting.
 <p>Open your windows</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let fresh air into your home – it reduces the spread of the virus.
 <p>Talk to your GP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are at a higher risk of falling very sick, talk to your GP about COVID medicines and have a plan for when you get COVID.
 <p>Look after others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are visiting someone vulnerable, take extra steps to ensure they are protected by wearing a face mask, staying physically distant, and not visiting if you have any symptoms.

What to do if you test positive for COVID-19



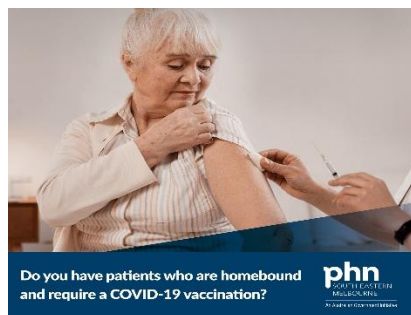
- **Look after your health.** Check whether you are eligible for treatment. COVID medicines work best within 5 days of getting symptoms.
- **Isolate.** Stay at home for at least 5 days and until you do not have any symptoms. If you need to leave home in an emergency, wear a face mask.
- **Report your result.** You can do it online or by calling 1800 675 398 so that we can help you access the right care and COVID medicines if eligible.
- **Tell your contacts.** Let people you have been in contact with know that you have COVID.
- **Don't go to work.** Call your workplace or school and let them know you have COVID. Some people can get financial support.
- **Avoid sensitive settings.** Don't visit or work in sensitive settings such as hospitals and aged care facilities.

Vaccination options



Moderna bivalent boosters now available

- The latest vaccine to prevent serious illness from the COVID-19 virus became available this week.
- The COVID-19 Moderna Spikevax Bivalent vaccine provides cover for the original 2020 strain and the Omicron variant BA.1.
- ATAGI approved the Moderna bivalent vaccine as an alternative vaccine for any booster dose in people aged 18 years or older.
- Both the new bivalent and the original vaccines provide significant protection from severe disease against Omicron subvariant infections.
- The recommendation is that booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine should be given at least 3 months after the most recent COVID-19 vaccine dose or previous COVID-19 infection.



In-Home vaccinations available for housebound residents

- South East Melbourne Public Health Network (SEMPHN) are accepting referrals for home visits within the SEMPHN catchment to vaccinate people who cannot leave the home to receive a COVID 19 vaccination.
- This may include the frail aged and elderly, and people living with a disability or a mental health condition which prevents them from leaving their home.
- [Request an in-home vaccination here](#)



Monash Health Vaccination Bus ready to roll

- The bus is available at least until the end of the year to provide pop-ups throughout the week and at weekend events to communities most at risk who may have barriers to engaging GPs and pharmacies.
- To request a pop-up vaccination clinic or education session please complete the [expression of interest form](#).
- The bus will be at the [Anti-Poverty Event in Harmony Square Dandenong on Wednesday 19 October](#).

Take some time out to look after yourself



National Mental Health Month – October 2022

- It may be a relief to many that the ‘Pandemic Declaration’ is officially removed across the country.
- The pandemic’s many impacts on our physical, mental and economic health are still being felt.
- Whatever your role in life, your age, situation or cultural background, you need to build in some recovery time and seek out some help.
- **#GettingThroughThisTogether** acknowledges the stressors and trauma of COVID-19. Check out the videos that provide practical tips to support mental wellbeing for everyone.
- Whether you’re seeking support in English or another language, **Head to Health** can also help you find suitable services and support.

Protecting yourself from other health hazards



Hay Fever and Thunderstorm Asthma

- Spring may be one of the most beautiful times of the year, but the season can also be a difficult time for many hay fever sufferers.
- Allergic Rhinitis (commonly known as hay fever) affects nearly 20% of Australians. In Victoria, hay fever is mainly caused by the nose and or eyes coming into contact with environmental allergens such as pollens, dust mites and material shed from animal fur, hair & feathers.
- During springtime, you can be at risk for thunderstorm asthma if you suffer from hay fever and asthma. If you’re vulnerable to asthma, it’s recommended you see a doctor and have an appropriate asthma action plan in place and rescue medications on hand.
- Watch our new video to hear from our allergy team on some tips you can use to help control your hay fever symptoms.
- The University of Melbourne offers a service called **Melbourne Pollen** that forecasts the level of grass pollen and several other types of pollen in the air. More information from the **BetterHealth Channel**.
- Read about Victoria’s new world-class thunderstorm asthma monitoring, prediction and alert system here.



Skilling up on health and communicating it to others



FREE Health Literacy Workshop

enliven can now offer their Hand-on Health Literacy workshop on Zoom to those who work with CALD communities, not just bicultural workers.

Wednesday 9 November 10am – 12pm online

Before the training participants will get videos explaining health literacy. In the 2 hour interactive workshop participants will learn:

- the importance of health literacy and how it impacts a person’s health
- about different types of verbal communication
- practical skills including the teach-back communication method

To book please register [here](#). More info: healthliteracy@enliven.org.au