

## **A Message from our CEO COVID – 19 Important Information for RIAC Clients and Families**

As you know, there is ongoing and growing concern about the spread of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus.

This is impacting on us here at RIAC, and as a disability support service, we have very specific vulnerabilities.

- We support many people with suppressed or vulnerable immune systems
- Many of our services happen in group settings
- Our clients' support needs make social distancing difficult to implement
- Our clients may have multiple visitors in their home
- Our clients may not understand the risks and additional hygiene measures required
- Our clients may be dependent on others for basic activities of daily living
- Our clients may not have suitable support and/or accommodation contingencies available to them.

While none of this means we need to panic, it does mean that we need to respond responsibly in line with government and medical advice and begin planning for a potential worsening of the situation. We urge you to stay vigilant.

### **What is RIAC doing to create a safe environment?**

- **We will continue to provide support to the community (unless advice changes), however, we will not be providing face to face services at this time.**
- We have cancelled all onsite meetings and video/teleconferencing will be utilised instead.
- Our staff will also not attend non-essential meetings or training at external sites.
- Staff not required to be physically present at the site will work from home.
- We have attached some easy read information to this email which may be of use (please consult latest official sources for these attachments).

**If you are concerned that you or your loved one may be infected:**

- The national 24/7 hotline triages people with respiratory symptoms and those who are concerned about contact with a possible Coronavirus case. If you think you may be infected you can call the triage hotline on 1800 020 080.

**Telehealth Services Available**

- Telehealth services will be available for people who:
  - are self-isolating according to medical advice
  - have chronic health conditions or who are immunocompromised
  - are parents with new babies
  - are pregnant.
  - over 70 or are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and over 50
- People in isolation or quarantine for Coronavirus can see any eligible health provider through new telehealth items.
- Patients in vulnerable groups can also see a health provider via telehealth for a non-Coronavirus matter if they have seen that provider face-to-face at least once in the previous 12 months.

**Telehealth for RIAC service areas:**

Area	Website	Phone Number
<b>Geelong clients</b>	<a href="http://www.bswtelehealth.org.au">www.bswtelehealth.org.au</a>	03 4215 1230
<b>Bendigo clients</b>	<a href="http://www.bendigohealth.org.au/telehealth">www.bendigohealth.org.au/telehealth</a>	03 5454 8896
<b>Shepparton clients</b>	<a href="http://www.gvhealth.org.au/telehealth">www.gvhealth.org.au/telehealth</a>	1800 222 582 Option 4
<b>Mildura clients</b>	<a href="http://www.mildurabase.com.au/Telehealth/Telehealth">www.mildurabase.com.au/Telehealth/Telehealth</a>	03 5022 3333
<b>Horsham Clients</b>	<a href="http://www.whcg.org.au/departments/145-telehealth/498-te!">http://www.whcg.org.au/departments/145-telehealth/498-te!</a>	03 5381 9111

**What do I need to make a video call?**

- A good connection to the internet  
(If you can watch video online (eg. YouTube) you can make a video call)
- A private, well-lit area where you will not be disturbed during the video call

- A Google Chrome web browser on a desktop or laptop (Windows or Mac) or on an Android tablet or smartphone
- Web-camera, speakers and microphone (may be built into laptops or mobile devices)
- If you are using an Apple device (such as an iPad or iPhone) you will need to use the Safari browser

### **What are the next steps?**

We are meeting regularly with staff, senior management, our Board of Management, and our funding providers to discuss the current health advice and the impact on our service.

- As always, you should feel free to call your key contact person in relation to your matter at this time
- We will be continuing to monitor the information provided by the government to ensure the best response in keeping people safe and infection free.

### **Useful site for information and resources**

Australian Department of health – [What you need to know about coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Department of Health and Human Services – [About coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

NDIS and disaster response – [Coronavirus information](#)

Every Australian Counts - [Useful information and advice](#)

Please stay informed and safe

Kind Regards



Karryn Goode  
RIAC CEO