Tuesday 24 March 2020

Good Afternoon Colleagues,

SHECC Summary, 24 March 2020 at 13:00

- A reminder that patients in quarantine (because of COVID-19 contact) must remain in quarantine for the full 14 days, even if they are asymptomatic and have a negative test.

- A Pandemic Health Response Implementation Advisory Group (PHRIAG) was established this morning, chaired by Dr Amanda Dines. The PHRIAG meets twice a day with the function to decrease the time to consider important issues and reach decisions on important, state-wide matters. The PHRIAG advises the CHO and DG and will replace the Clinical Co-ordination Group.

- The imminent closure of the Queensland border will have practical implications, including in health care, e.g. workforce, maintenance and families. SHECC raised concerns that are being considered but there is currently no guidance – this will follow. For now, it is worth sharing that healthcare workers who cross the border for work purposes, and who are asymptomatic, will not have to go into mandatory 14-day quarantine.

- There has been a ‘lockdown’ of indigenous communities in Queensland. More information about the practical implications will follow.

- Concerns were raised about retrieval of patients with COVID-19 from rural and remote areas, whether this would happen or not, and the role of RFDS. At this time, RFDS do have a role, and the arrangement is that patients will be retrieved. Once there is confirmed community transmission, and if the number of patients increase, the feasibility of this arrangement will be reviewed.

MBS items

- The COVID-19 MBS items were expanded, and the MBS Online website was updated on 23 March 2020: http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/news-2020-03-01-latest-news-March

Queensland Health COVID-19 website

- The QH website has had a refresh, and the GP section is now easier than ever to access: https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/novel-coronavirus-qld-clinicians. Please remember that our COVID-19 HealthPathway (HP) is our source of truth and is updated regularly.

Resources


Three resources from NSW about aerosol generating therapies are attached for interest.

Medication and influenza vaccination

- The consensus agreement of all stakeholders are that clinicians should not currently be issuing Reg 24 (Regulation 24, now Regulation 49) prescriptions to help manage medication stock in hospital but also community settings.

- Influenza vaccines and vaccination information should be available today or tomorrow. I will share this in a separate Update focusing only on this issue.

PPE

- Many primary care clinicians and organisations continue to share considerable concerns about PPE stock and availability. Unfortunately, this is a ‘wicked problem’; a big thank you to the AMA for their ongoing advocacy – today’s press release attached for interest.

Inspirational act of kindness

The attached photo demonstrates a recent, random act of kindness. It is a lovely reminder of our abundance of our human capacity to adapt, care and even thrive despite adversity.

Best wishes,
Carl

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About this Document:
- This document was an e-mail sent to a wide range of primary care staff and clinicians. The content is related to COVID-19 and the Queensland response and is intended for the free use and wide dissemination by the recipients or anyone else who access this webpage.
- Every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate and up-to-date. If you become aware of any issues, please notify us so we can amend our documents.
- Please provide any feedback or contact us using our e-mail COVID19-PC@health.qld.gov.au. Please note that the inbox is not continuously monitored, and we may not be able to respond to every message.