

March 20, 2020

Hi Everyone,

This update is to let you know about the changes in our COVID-19 actions since the March 13 updates were sent out and posted to the website which still apply. So, if you have not read those yet please do so.

- Travel – At March 13 we listed certain countries which required self-isolation for both staff and clients. This protocol now applies to any international travel.
- Sanitisation – enforced at all sites and reinforced in various ways to keep it top of mind. Everyone is washing or cleaning hands and wiping down surfaces regularly.
- Temperature checks – we are now checking temperatures of staff and clients on a daily basis as they arrive.
- Absences – Some families have chosen to keep their families members home and we understand it's an uncertain time. We just ask that you give us notice so we are aware.
- Day Service Programs – with some client numbers down at some sites we are adapting our programs to meet the new conditions and keep everyone engaged. In some cases, we may not have had time to communicate these changes with families but we hope you understand these are unusual times and we need to stay agile and adapt. Some larger agencies have recently closed their Day Service programs but at this time we intend to carry on and provide our clients and families with the best support we can. Unlike some of the other agencies, we operate small groups at multiple Day Service sites which gives us some more flexibility. However, if you are seeking alternative supports given the unusual environment then please let us know as we are keen to see how we might be able to assist. We have great staff, they are all keen to keep working, the NDIS is giving more flexibility with how core funds can be used and we can be creative in how we support you.
 - Sages Cottage Farm – to enable our clients to take full advantage of this 40-acre property and achieve all our social distancing protocols we have decided to close the farm to the general public from Monday. While we have loved the public interaction, it's not the time for that now and we are excited about having the farm all to ourselves for a while.
 - Ebdale – the Frankston Council decided to close the facility at very short notice (like some other Council facilities such as libraries) so we have relocated the Day Services group to our Langwarrin site. We also have access to another great site at the Mornington Football Club which we plan to utilise more over this period.
- Social Distancing – we posted about this on March 19. We have adapted all our programs to include this safety measure as much as practical. Even at Logistics we have changed our work set up in all areas to ensure social distancing applies as much as practical and we have been really impressed at how the clients have embraced that.
- Aged Care programs – our clients have been running small cafes at several Aged Care facilities. We have suspended all these programs to keep those residents and our clients safe.
- There have been no confirmed cases at our agency. A few staff who travelled overseas are self-isolating. Some families have told us they are keeping their family members home because of illness to be safe. If a case does occur then we are ready to take the necessary action and all our protocols are in place.

I hope this update is helpful. We will keep reviewing our arrangements and do our best to keep you updated in a very challenging time for everyone.

Best wishes

Phil Hayes-Brown,
Chief Executive Officer