



COVID-19

Manager Bulletin

COVID-19 Manager Bulletin – 16 September 2020

This email is for Monash Health managers.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an evolving situation. This advice is correct as of 16 September 2020.

Message from the Chief Executive

Staying the course

In the news this week, there are a couple of key points – there is a small outbreak of COVID-19 in the Dandenong area; however, in an overall sense, the numbers are coming down.

This news provides some hope and a reminder that we must stay vigilant. It was great to hear from our teams on the ground yesterday, particularly Refugee Health and Complex Care, about their intensive work with families to help support them through this local outbreak and ensure they have what they need to isolate safely and understand health information.

The challenge for all of us at a state and local level is to stay the course.

That means, even as numbers come down, and we start to see some loosening of restrictions, we need to stick to the safety-first approach, which has helped us get this far.

You will see much of this bulletin focuses on what you need to do to work with your team to keep everyone safe.

I've seen a bit of 'safety fatigue' in the community, for example, people wandering around without masks, and I'm sure the same complacency will creep into our workplace if we let it.

So please set the bar high and be clear and strong with your teams about what is expected at work.

There are now additional measures in place to help healthcare workers get PPE right in high-risk areas. We also continue to review and refine our approach to PPE to make sure we are staying in line with the latest thinking and best practice. Inevitably this means more change as we learn. Please slow down, take the time to [read our updated PPE guidance](#), and protect yourselves, our patients, and the community.

You've done a great job so far, and I know you'll keep it up.

Stay safe, be well.

Andrew Stripp
Chief Executive

Priorities this week:

- Complete any outstanding Workplace Inspections.
- Visit the BI Portal and ensure your team has completed the Employee Workplace Declaration form.
- Make sure your team members understand their obligations in relation to the daily workplace attestation.
- Nominate your next STAR award winner – nominations close on 30 September.

Key messages

Compliance with workplace attestation

By now, those of you going into any one of our sites will be getting used to completing the [daily attestation](#). This is about helping to make workplaces safer for Victorian healthcare workers – we need to be sure everyone is well before commencing a workday on-site.

Please encourage compliance within your team and help them understand that we all play our part in ending transmission of COVID-19. If they feel unwell or display any COVID-19 symptoms, do not attend work, get tested, and isolate until a negative result is returned.

Reassure your team members they will not be disadvantaged if they need to isolate due to a positive result. There is specific financial, accommodation, and leave assistance for healthcare workers affected by COVID-19. If people are concerned at all, there is some excellent information available on the [attestations webpage](#)

Employee declaration – has your team submitted?

The [Employee Workplace Declaration form](#) is another safety initiative from the Public Health Commander that requires all Victorian healthcare workers to declare their work with any organisation, including paid, unpaid and voluntary work. Students undertaking placements should also [complete a student declaration form](#).

If you manage a team, please log in to the [Business Intelligence Portal](#) to check the status of your team members and encourage those who have not declared to do so as soon as possible.

What do you say after R U OK?

We had a very powerful conversation as part of R U OK? Day last week and I hope you and your teams took something away from it. If you missed it, you [can catch up online](#). One of the key messages is to keep the conversation going, and [there are resources online](#) to help you if you are struggling with how to start or continue those conversations.

I am pleased to see some of the things teams have done to pause, engage with the message, to acknowledge how they are feeling, and to check in with their team mates. You will see some lovely photos online in coming days.

These kinds of things remind me every day what a wonderful group of people we work with.

Reducing movement across sites

We have been working to decrease employee movement across our sites to reduce risk of COVID-19 cross infection. In line with the Commonwealth's guiding principles, working across sites within residential aged care facilities has ceased.

Working across sites outside of residential aged care is minimised as much as possible, however, in order to effectively deliver services to our community, some movement remains necessary. Please carefully consider if movement is required for your team to successfully carry out their work. [Learn more here.](#)

Some updates for furloughed employees

A furloughed employee timeline document has been added to the [Furloughed employee webpage](#) along with this, the question 'Can I ask my employees to work from home while on furlough?' has been answered in the manager's [FAQS.](#)

Carry out your Workplace Inspections

Workplace Inspections help prevent accidents and keep us safe. This is a task that is essential to our safety and wellbeing and, of course, includes safety measures associated with COVID-19. If you're a manager, please ensure that your workplace inspections are completed, and any required action taken swiftly.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment focus

We are continuing to focus on increasing the numbers of Aboriginal employees at Monash Health, in line with our commitments in our [Reconciliation Action Plan.](#)

Managers need to be aware of the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Procedure** and work in line with its principles when they have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants. The procedure is on Prompt. And just a gentle reminder if you haven't completed the new, mandatory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness eLearning Package, it is available to access at any time on [LATTE.](#)

Additional shared workspaces

We are creating and allocating additional shared workspaces across Monash Health. These are now available at Clayton, Dandenong and Casey, and in the coming weeks, workspaces will also be made available at Kingston and Moorabbin. Library areas are also encouraged for quiet work activities across our sites. [Find out more](#) about these additional spaces and their capacity. We will monitor the use of these spaces to inform ongoing decisions.

Your role in managing shared spaces

To ensure rooms are not at or exceeding their capacity, Managers are responsible for creating break schedules, advising on suitable rooms/spaces, and ensuring those spaces are used safely. A [Shared Spaces Dashboard is now available and accessible to you via the BI Portal.](#) Check-in data will be updated daily and will allow you to view and track the occupancy and capacity of the shared spaces in your area.

In high-risk areas such as COVID-19 or suspected-COVID-19 wards, an alternate check-in method, such as paper-based templates may be utilised. A template is available in the [Managers Guide to Shared Spaces.](#) These should be scanned and digitally filed daily at **G:\COVID Tracing Shared Spaces.** Folder management information is available within the same G-drive folder (which all employees now have access to).

For resources, FAQs, requests, and additional information, visit the [shared spaces page](#) on the COVID employee website.

Positive Leadership, something for everyone

Last week's R U OK? Day forum featured Andrew Jones from Converge, who also made [some great points](#) about the benefits of trust within a team and its importance to successful leadership. If you'd like to see his presentation, you can jump to the 34-minute mark and take a quick look at some ideas about how to better connect with your people.

Andrew also pointed people to an article called '[The psychology behind effective crisis leadership](#)' from the Harvard Business Review.

Listening Loudly a key skill for managers

Have you ever had a conversation with a team member and been distracted by your phone or an email? Did you really pay attention? You weren't fooling anyone – people know when we are distracted. During a recent Manager Briefing, Head of Organisational Development, Barry Bloch, reflected on the challenge of managing and leading during the pandemic and that perhaps during COVID-19, the concept of 'active listening' is not enough. We need to be 'listening loudly'. Barry challenges us that if we are in fact distracted, it would be better to stop the conversation until we can give someone our full attention; turn off the noise, be present, don't be afraid to show your humanity. "Focus your mind and your time on the people you lead, and they, in turn, will follow and support your leadership efforts."

Barry has [written an article](#) on the art of listening loudly, which he says is the new leadership requirement in our fractured society. Have a read and think about how you might work on the five disciplines outlined.

STAR nominations and a new way to give 'virtual' thanks

Have you nominated your team members for the July – September quarter of the STAR Awards? Is there another team or individual you have observed performing with excellence or delivering something extraordinary? Now is the chance to nominate them. Learn more by visiting the [STAR page](#) on the coronavirus employee website.

We also have a new way to acknowledge those everyday examples of kindness, excellence, and employees going the extra mile. Our STAR cards are the perfect everyday way to say thank you and acknowledge your colleagues for their hard work and dedication. There is a new e-card template available to [download](#), personalise, and email straight to your colleague or team. Alternatively, hard copy cards are still available to order via iproc, using the code: #174422.

The importance of resilience during COVID-19

Monash Health Clinical Psychologist, Max von Sabler, recently spoke about the importance of resilience. For managers, the framework Max used could be a very helpful tool: that we should move away from thinking of mental health as either good or bad and instead think about degrees of mental wellbeing and mental illness, ranging from high to low. [Learn more tips here](#). You can also [view Max's presentation](#) and access his slides and other wellbeing resources on the [Monash Health COVID-19 website](#).

The latest in leadership material – building resilience

Continuing on the theme of resilience, have you had a chance to look at some of the library materials in the new [library guide for managers](#)? One of the very topical pieces is an open access article from BMJ Leader, which indicates that resilience is something you 'do' not something you

'have'. This is a great message for all of us. For a good read over a coffee, take a look at ['Resilience in action: leading for resilience in response to COVID-19'](#)

Encourage fellow managers to sign up

If you are concerned someone you know should be receiving the bulletin in their email and isn't, please [send them this link](#) and encourage them to sign up. [All previous](#) editions are available on the coronavirus website.

Ensure you are working to the most up-to-date advice

Ensure you are working to the most up-to-date advice by referring to the [Monash Health Employee Coronavirus website](#). To make accessing the site quicker, you can create a shortcut on your smartphone by [following these instructions](#).

All managers are requested to use these updates in discussions with their teams and then disseminate relevant information at stand-ups and handovers.

As advice and information evolve, please consult the latest updates and visit the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) and [Monash Health COVID-19 website](#) for employees regularly for the latest.
