



SSN Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Bulletin #1

Dear SSN Members,

Introduction

The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is now a pandemic and the Government advice includes that we should all be vigilant to avoid the spreading of this disease.

The well-being and safety of our volunteer Members and our Clients is the top priority for the SSN Management Committee (MC). This bulletin is to update you on initial measures by the SSN to help protect Members and Clients from the COVID-19 virus. As the situation evolves the MC may update this bulletin. If you have any concerns, please contact your relevant MC Member.

Summary of current preventative steps

Some of the key measures recommended by the authorities include:

- (a) Frequently washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- (b) Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow, or into a tissue (and immediately dispose of the tissue in a bin).
- (c) Do not touch your mouth or nose after touching a potentially infectious surface.
- (d) Avoid close contact with others.
- (e) Self-isolate (stay at home) if you are unwell.

We encourage all members and their families and friends to follow these simple steps. The full list of measures can be found at the Queensland and Australian government websites (links are at the end of this bulletin) and we strongly encourage you to visit these sites regularly for updates.

Current advice is that most people who catch the virus will fully recovery with normal treatment, and have symptoms similar to influenza (cough, sneeze, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, aches and pains). It is apparent that people who are elderly, or have chronic medical conditions, or compromised immune systems (e.g. cancer patients) are particularly at risk from this virus.

SSN Advisory

As many of our Clients are in the high-risk category, the SSN Management Committee suggest the following practices be used by all SSN Members who have face to face contact with Clients, usually as drivers or through client visitation/deliveries:

- (a) Members are advised to carry antiseptic wipes/hand-gel and tissues for use in cleaning their car and their hands/face before and after a drive, especially if they suspect the Client is unwell.
- (b) Members are advised to wash their hands as soon as practicable before and after contact with a Client.
- (c) If you are transporting a Client and the Client exhibits any sign of coughing or sneezing or fever (excessive sweating) then refuse to drive them, instead encourage them to return to their home and contact by telephone their GP, Pharmacist or 13Health (13 43 25 84) for advice.
- (d) Members must NOT drive or attend any SSN function or activity if showing any symptoms of being unwell, or knowingly been in contact with Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) carrier or suspected carrier, or (of course) if they are in self-quarantine or self-isolation for any reason.

In addition, as much as possible our drive coordinators will contact SSN Private Clients as soon as a drive is confirmed to ask them to advise SSN should they become unwell prior to the drive, and to cancel the drive. They will also be advised that the driver may refuse to drive them if they have any concerns about their health.

SSN Review and future actions

The SSN MC are reviewing how we can help in the event that Clients require home delivery of urgent provisions and medication, working with local businesses and other organisations on a coordinated approach.

The MC will also constantly review the advice in this Bulletin and issue an update should it be required.

And of course, everyone is advised to follow the latest Government advice.

Information sources

Queensland Government, Queensland Health:

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/coronavirus/public-info-novel-coronavirus/fact-sheet-coronavirus>

Australian Government Department of Health:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>