

Dear Chief Executives,

NSW Health moves to Green Alert - COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Response

Effective immediately, NSW Health services will move from amber alert, or moderate transmission to green alert, or low transmission in line with the [COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Response Framework](#).

This decision follows discussion at the Risk Escalation Review Panel today which includes representatives from the Ministry, Public Health Emergency Operations Centre, the Agency for Clinical Innovation and the Clinical Excellence Commission. The Panel's recommendation has been actioned in consultation with the Chief Health Officer.

The decision has been reinforced in the knowledge of no locally acquired COVID-19 cases in NSW in the past week. The Panel has determined that cases in neighbouring states remain low despite a resurgence of locally acquired cases in South Australia.

Current risk levels are monitored on the [COVID-19 Risk Monitoring Dashboard](#).

Facilities should be reassured alert levels are unlikely to shift on a frequent basis as changes require consideration of multiple factors including:

1. Geographic clusters within LHDs, Local Government Areas or across the State
2. Levels of community transmission and the public health response
3. Number of COVID-19 tests and the percentage of tests that are positive
4. Number of patients requiring hospitalisation
5. Outbreaks in facilities e.g. residential aged care facilities
6. Number of health worker infections

An important factor related to the risk level of green, amber and red is the corresponding use of personal protective equipment.

With the transition to a green alert, most staff do not need to wear a surgical mask when within 1.5 metres of a patient. Mask wearing is still required for staff working in emergency departments and for all staff when attending to patients who have an acute respiratory infection. Patients presenting to the emergency department should continue to be encouraged to wear masks. Most other patients are not required to wear masks.

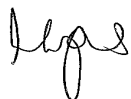
The use of PPE for any suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 remains unchanged.

A full matrix of infection prevention and control practices under each alert level is available with the [Framework](#) together with printable posters to support communication with staff and patients.

The fundamental principles of infection prevention and control including maintaining social distancing, regular hand hygiene and cough etiquette must continue to be applied across all settings.

If you require further information on the Framework please contact Carrie Marr, Chief Executive, Clinical Excellence Commission via carrie.marr@health.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely,



Dr Nigel Lyons
Deputy Secretary, Health System Strategy and Planning
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