



Considerations for disability service delivery

Questions to consider if a person with disability or support worker is suspected or confirmed with Coronavirus (COVID-19)

10 May 2021

The Disability Taskforce has developed a series of prompting questions to consider if a person with disability or support worker is suspected or confirmed with COVID-19. The document accompanies the outbreak scenario flowcharts located on the Department of Communities [Disability service providers \(COVID-19\)](#) webpage.

The questions may be useful in various situations, including people with disability living in the community independently or with family; people with disability living in supported accommodation; and support workers delivering supports. Note this not an exhaustive list and other factors need to be considered depending on the person's situation.

General

- For Disability Service Providers, has the business continuity plan been activated?
 - This should identify strategies to reduce the risk of infection to people with disability and staff, and ensure continued access to essential supports, including contingency workforce planning.
- If preparedness planning has been done by or with the person with disability previously, can this be referred to now?
 - Refer to the *Preparedness planning for COVID-19* resources listed on the Department of Communities [People with disability, their families and carers \(COVID-19\)](#) webpage
- For registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers, has the NDIS Safeguards and Quality Commission been notified?
- If additional supports are required due to COVID-19, has the funding body been informed?
 - NDIS participants – phone 1800 800 110, select option 5
 - People with disability funded by the State:



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- Continuity of Support Arrangement (under 65) – phone 08 6167 8131 or email COOSA@dsc.wa.gov.au
- Continuity of Support Program (over 65) – email CoSCoVIDNotification@health.gov.au
- Is it safe for the person to isolate at home?
 - If there is not a safe place to isolate phone the State Incident Welfare Coordination Centre (SWICC) on 13 COVID (13 26843)

Communication

- Has communication occurred with the person with disability, carer and/or legal guardian?
- Has communication with staff occurred?
- How will ongoing communication occur with key parties throughout the outbreak?

Adjusting supports

- Which services and supports are critical to keep the person with disability safe?
 - For critical supports, all actions and contingencies should be taken to ensure the continued provision of such supports.
- Can supports temporarily be delivered via an alternative means? For example, moving services to phone-based or interactive online services rather than face-to-face.
- Are there any supports that can temporarily cease until the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) within the Western Australia (WA) Department of Health advise the person with COVID-19 has recovered?
- What strategies can be implemented to maintain social connection, safety and mental health?
- For Australian Disability Enterprises, if a person with disability is isolating at home can check-ins occur?
 - Consider the risk for each person's situation to guide the frequency of check-ins and additional supports which may be required. For example, someone with excellent external supports may require less check-ins than a person who has minimal external supports



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Staffing

- Can the number of staff who come into direct contact with the person with disability be reduced? Can staff rosters be changed?
- Can alternative sources of staff be identified, if required?
 - Establishing a rapid response group of staff willing to be redeployed quickly where staff need to self-isolate
 - Reorganising staff rosters between different worksite locations managed by the same provider
 - Hiring agency staff

Infection prevention and control

- Is there adequate stock of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other materials for the first two weeks of any outbreak?
- Do staff have access to PPE and other materials immediately required?
- Has the latest advice from WA Department of Health regarding PPE use been checked? See [COVID-19 information for aged care and community care providers](#)
- Are staff trained and competent in the use of PPE (including disposal) when providing care to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?
- Have enhanced cleaning and disinfection principles been implemented in the person with disability's home?

Read the [Disability Sector – Preparedness Guide for COVID-19](#) for comprehensive information on preparing for a COVID-19 outbreak.