

Colleagues hi,

I am writing to advise you of the steps Disability Services Australia (DSA) is taking to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on our community.

Over the past weeks, DSA has been preparing for what this means for us now and what it might look like for our participants, our employees and our communities in the coming months.

My priority as always is our people. The health, safety and wellbeing of our participants and employees is vital.

We have been closely monitoring the outbreak of COVID-19, and are taking a proactive approach in line with the Australian Government's health advice around the actions we can all take to prevent the spread of the virus.

Due to the work we do with vulnerable people, we are also following the Government's directives to the aged care sector in the absence of any specific guidance for the disability sector.

We have made the following decisions regarding our services:

- **All DSA services** have put in place measures to limit access to non-essential visitors, enhance personal hygiene and infection control and implement social distancing. This includes all DSA's Employment and Training Services: **METS Training** (RTO), **Employment Solutions** (DES & SLES) and **Packaging Solutions** (ADE) sites.
- Our **Community Solutions** (Day Programs) are currently limiting community activities and minimising contact between people in our centres.
- After careful consideration we have made the difficult decision to **suspend services at our Blacktown, Camperdown and Port Stephens centres effective from end of day Friday 20 March**. We continue to monitor changing conditions and may need to extend suspension to other centres over the coming days and weeks.
- Our **Home Solutions** (Group Homes) will continue to operate with plans in place to support staff and participants through isolation if required.
- DSA's **Support Coordination** services remain active and the team are prepared to be able to work from home should that need arise.
- Staff providing **1:1 support to participants** in their home and community have received increased support and PPE.

There is no doubt that the situation with the current COVID-19 outbreak is quickly developing and is likely to change our way of life and our way of delivering supports for our participants for quite some time.

We have a dedicated team focused on enacting our Business Continuity Plan and we will continue to review services and staff availability challenges on a case-by-case basis.

Our teams are working closely with our participants, their families and supports.

We understand that many of our participants rely on a number of providers for a range of supports and the decisions we make as an organisation may have an impact on other organisations involved in a participant's life.

We are committed to maintaining open lines of communication with you all to support our participants and the disability community through this time.

We will be reducing operations at our support office in Bankstown, enabling people in non-critical roles to work from home and implementing social distancing to reduce the risks for our people.

As this public health emergency continues to unfold we know that our response will need to be agile, responding to changing circumstances daily.

Our focus is on keeping our participants and employees informed and will also post regular updates on our website: <https://www.dsa.org.au/coronavirus-update/>.

If you have any questions or concerns about the information in this letter then please contact me on lhart@dsa.org.au or 0490 297 346.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Hart', with a large, stylized initial 'L'.

Leisa Hart
Chief Executive Officer