

1 September 2020

COVID – 19 - CORONAVIRUS

Important New Information for our Participants, their Families and Carers

Thank you for your understanding and support of the measures we have implemented since March when our responses to the Coronavirus commenced.

Safeguarding our participants remains our priority and we have received updated advice this week from Dr Kerry Chant, Chief Health Officer - NSW Health requesting that we implement visitor restrictions immediately, and until further notice, given the continued community transmission of the virus in Metropolitan Sydney and a number of regional areas in NSW.

We are responding responsibly in line with the latest government and medical advice and are putting plans in place for a potential worsening of the situation.

In order to protect our participants and our employees, we have protocols in place for access to our Home Solutions and Mentoring Services sites:

- **Only the nominated decision maker will be able to visit the home**
- Until further notice, only one visitor is allowed to the home at any one time
- The following people must NOT enter DSA premises:
 - staff / visitors with fever $\geq 37.5^{\circ}$ C or flu like symptoms
 - staff / visitors who have been in Victoria in the previous 14 days
 - staff / visitors who have been in close contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19
 - staff / visitors who have visited any of the locations on the same day/ time as a COVID-19 case (see updated list of venues and dates at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates>).
- All staff / visitors must enter their details in a register at the site to facilitate contact tracing if required
- All staff / visitors will be required to wash their hands immediately upon entry to the house and to follow strict hygiene measures whilst on site.

We are taking these steps as we support people with a range of vulnerabilities:

- We support many people with suppressed or vulnerable immune systems
- Our participants' support needs may make social distancing difficult to implement

- Our participants may not understand the risks and additional hygiene measures required
- Our participants may be dependent on others for basic activities of daily living
- Our participants may have multiple visitors in their home.

What is DSA doing?

DSA has a COVID Response team which meets regularly to consider the current health advice and the impact on our services.

We are closely monitoring the information provided by the government to ensure the best response in keeping people safe and infection free.

We have implemented the following measures to keep our participants safe:

- We have increased the frequency of environmental cleaning.
- We have implemented compulsory training for staff on the importance of good hygiene.
- Each site has a nominated Infection Control Lead who is responsible for ensuring enhanced cleaning and PPE protocols are followed.
- Wherever possible therapists and specialists will conduct telehealth sessions instead of attending sites.
- We have cancelled all onsite meetings where social distancing cannot be maintained and are utilising video/teleconferencing instead.
- Staff displaying any flu-like symptoms will not attend the site until medically cleared to return.

There are a number of Easy Read resources available on our website and from your key DSA contact person. Our website will have regular updates so please check the site <https://www.dsa.org.au/coronavirus-covid-19/> often.

As always, feel free to call your key contact person if you have any concerns about your family member or the service.

The health, safety and wellbeing of our participants and employees is my priority and we appreciate your support and understanding during these challenging times.

Please stay safe and take care.



Leisa Hart - CEO