

04 September 2020

NATSIHWA COVID-19 Update

Since our last COVID-19 update on 21 August 2020 the situation remains much the same across Australia. In Victoria, with strict lock down restrictions still in place, case numbers continue to decline and have remained under 100 for most of the week. New South Wales is still registering a small number of cases each day and while Queensland continues on high alert after small outbreaks over the last couple of weeks they registered no new cases today. Remaining States and Territories continue to register no outbreaks or community transmission.

Meanwhile, across Australia the division between Federal and State/Territory Governments in regards to border closures persists. To recap, the federal government considers that strict border closures are unwarranted and impacting negatively on the economy, while many State/Territory leaders are keeping borders closed to stop the spread of the virus and keep their citizens safe.

The National Cabinet met again today and while they failed to reach consensus on these issues they did reach a majority agreement to keep working towards the development of a new '*hotspot*' model for opening up borders by December 2020. Work to agree a definition of a '*hotspot*' is ongoing. This new model would include the development of bi/multilateral agreements to deal with cross border situations as they arise. During the forum leaders also agreed to boost the capacity of international plane arrivals in recognition of the large number of citizens unable to return home from overseas.

Even though case numbers are currently confined to the eastern States everyone across Australia must remain vigilant. The outbreak in Victoria has demonstrated the danger COVID-19 poses to older people with chronic health conditions so the need to protect our elders and the other vulnerable members of our communities remains ongoing.

The pandemic continues to change our lives in all different ways. If you are in Victoria and are impacted by the ongoing restrictions – we understand you must be feeling fatigued. We thank you for helping to stop the spread of COVID-19 and for playing a role in keeping the rest of Australia safe. To all our other members please remember to take care of your own health and wellbeing and to encourage your friends and family to do the same. A range of COVID-19 health and wellbeing tips and resources can be accessed on the Gayaa Dhuwi website at: <https://www.gayaadhuwi.org.au/coronavirus/>. Their posters may be useful for your workplaces too.

Thanks again for the work that you do and please stay safe.

The NATSIHWA Team

