

CORONAVIRUS

COVID-19

BULLETIN #3

14 FEBRUARY 2022

This communique has been prepared by the Gladstone Region Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Service Ltd t/a Nahulundu Health Service in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic. With the situation changing rapidly, Nahulundu Health Service are continuing to review and update our response in line with the latest advice from both the Australian and Queensland Governments.

Based on the latest advice regarding COVID-19 preventative measures, we have adjusted our usual business activities to minimize infection risks to our clients and employees. Our primary focus is to provide a safe and effective service for all clients and staff. To ensure continuity of care, we've introduced some new procedures to protect our clients and staff.

The following information is an update on measures that are being implemented, effective immediately, at Nahulundu Health Service concerning the COVID-19 pandemic;



Telehealth & Video Consultations

We are transitioning our Primary Health Care/General Practice consultations to Telehealth or video consultations where we can. However, if you require a face-to-face consultation with your GP, face-to-face appointments remain available.

All, Family Wellbeing, Mental Health, and Social & Emotional Wellbeing and some Allied Health service consultations have been moved to Telehealth/video consultations.

The recent expansion of Telehealth Consultations by the Australian Government under the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) is welcomed relief and is another measure to help ensure the safety and wellbeing of our frontline health and aged care staff, clients and community.

To provide the best possible care we have purchased smartphones (iPhone & Samsung) to allow those clients with smartphones to either FaceTime or Video Call with their Doctor / General Practitioner (GP). We will use Video Call options on the purchased smartphones along with Microsoft Teams on our laptops. This is complemented by our cloud-based telehealth software, lifiesizecloud, which allows clients and other healthcare providers to videoconference with Nahulundu Health Service.



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Entering the Clinic

When your appointment has been confirmed you will receive an SMS with several pre-screening questions using our HotDoc SMS system. At the door, you'll be greeted by one of our friendly team who will run through some final questions with you before entering the clinic.

Patients who are not up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations (received two or more doses) and patients with cold or flu-like symptoms will be triaged to the second clinic to the rear of the building.



E-Scripts & Pathology Referrals

We are transitioning our Pathology referrals to online referrals where we can, using our patient information recall system (Best Practice).

We are also transitioning to using e-scripts (electronic prescriptions) for prescribing patient medication where we can. You may still choose to receive a paper prescription if you prefer.

An e-script is a prescription that is generated electronically and sent to you by your doctor via email or SMS, allowing you to conveniently access your scripts from your smartphone or email. An e-script replaces the paper prescription.

How do they work?

1. Your GP will ask whether you would like an e-script or a paper prescription.
2. Your GP will then send a unique QR barcode (known as a 'token') to your mobile phone or email. If you have more than one medication being prescribed, your GP will send a separate token for each medication.
3. Check with your pharmacist on where they would like you to send your script next, some pharmacies allow you to share your script via email, SMS, in-store, or by online ordering through their mobile app, so it's best to check with your local pharmacy.
4. From there, you can securely share your e-script with your pharmacist for dispensing and collection.



Vaccination Clinics

We have ceased operation of our after-hours vaccination clinic and reverted to normal business operating hours for vaccinations (Monday to Friday between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm).

Australian children aged between 5-11 years old are now eligible to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine after it cleared the final regulatory step and was recommended for use in this age group by the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). ATAGI recommends children aged 5-11 receive two 10 microgram doses (which is one-third of the over-12s dose), eight weeks apart.

We continue to offer both Pfizer and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccinations to eligible patients and are currently investigating the use of the Novavax vaccine in the future.

Nhulundu Health Service encourages all clients aged 16 years and above to make an appointment to receive your COVID-19 vaccine booster dose if you haven't done so already. Getting a booster dose is the best thing you can do to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community against COVID-19.



Mask Wearing & PPE

To protect you and our staff, all clinicians are now wearing full personal protective equipment (PPE), with Primary Health Care and Aged Care staff wearing either a disposable Face Shield or goggles when undertaking direct client contact. All other staff are wearing disposable face masks while on the premises.



Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs)

To ensure a safe environment for you and our staff, all staff are undertaking a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) before the commencement of their daily shift/entering the premises.

Unfortunately, due to a lack of supply, we are unable to perform a RAT on every client who enters the clinic. There may be some circumstances, however, where staff will offer you a RAT to complete as part of our triage process.



Complaints & Feedback

Your comments are important to us and we would encourage you to have your say and voice your thoughts, concerns and expressions appropriately. If you have any feedback, complaints or suggestions, please let us know using our feedback form which can be found on the 'Contact' page of our website www.nhulundu.com.au/contact/

Alternatively, if you would prefer to make your feedback, complaints or suggestions anonymous, please download our Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions Form and submit it by dropping into the clinic or sending it by mail.

Nhulundu Health Service would like to remind our clients that there is no excuse for abuse. We take it very seriously if a member of staff or one of the doctors or nursing team is treated in an abusive or violent way. Our staff are trained and dedicated to serve you and you will be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. In return, we request that our doctors, staff and nursing team are treated with the same courtesy and respect.

We maintain a ZERO TOLERANCE approach to any verbal, aggressive and violent abuse and behaviour towards our doctors, staff and nursing team or other patients. We respectfully advise you that abuse and/or violence will not be tolerated. If required the Police will be called which may result in the person concerned being removed from our practice.

Please remember, if you have any flu-like symptoms stay home where possible, wear your mask, wash your hands frequently with soap, cover your mouth if you have a cough or sneeze, and phone ahead to our surgery before your appointment on (07) 49790 992.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Jenny Kerr
Clinical Practice Manager



Matthew Cooke
Chief Executive Officer

For more information on the COVID-19 Pandemic visit:

Queensland Health

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19>

Australian Government - Department of Health

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

World Health Organisation

https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

<https://www.naccho.org.au/home/aboriginal-health-alerts-coronavirus-covid-19/>