



# **KITWEK ASSOCIATION INC. RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

March 2020

*'Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is NOT quickly broken'. (Eccl. 4:12)*

Kitwek Association Inc. is concerned with the Covid-19 pandemic and its potential impact on members, the community and Australia at large. The association supports government interventions in this fight.

This document aims to present current and accurate information on Covid-19 and help sensitize members on the pandemic.

## UNDERSTANDING COVID-19

### 1. Symptoms

The Australian Department of Health website indicates that symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever
- Coughing
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath

### 2. How it spreads

The virus can spread from person to person through:

- Close contact with an infectious person (including in the 24 hours before they started showing symptoms)
- Contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze
- Touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables) that have cough or sneeze droplets from an infected person and then touching your mouth or face

### 3. Testing

If you are sick and think you have symptoms of COVID-19, seek medical advice.

Your doctor will tell you if you need to be tested and can arrange a test.

In Perth, Western Australia, Covid-19 clinics are located at:

- Royal Perth Hospital – Ground Floor, Ainslie House, 48 Murray Street, Perth
- Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital – C Block, Hospital Avenue, Nedlands
- Fiona Stanley Hospital – Bedbrook Row, north-eastern end of hospital, Murdoch
- Armadale Health Service – Ground Floor, 3056 Albany Highway Mount Nasura

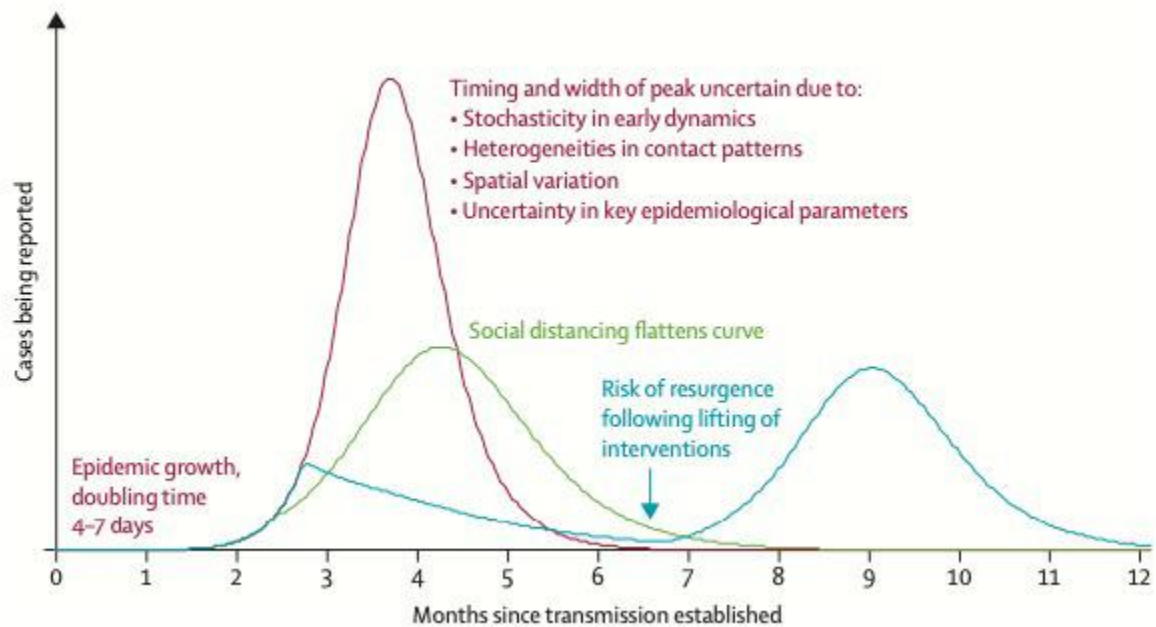
The National Coronavirus Helpline is **1800 020 080** (operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

You will only be tested if your doctor decides you meet the criteria:

- You have returned from overseas in the past 14 days and you develop respiratory illness with or without fever
- You have been in close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case in the past 14 days and you develop respiratory illness with or without fever
- You have severe community-acquired pneumonia and there is no clear cause
- You are a healthcare worker who works directly with patients and you have a respiratory illness and a fever

#### 4. Let us “Flatten the Curve”

The virus spread is illustrated by the graph below:



- To flatten the curve means to slow the spread. The virus appears to be transmitted primarily through virus-filled droplets that infected people cough or sneeze into the air.
- This means transmission can be reduced through **social distancing** measures. These include physical barriers, good hygiene and reducing various forms of mingle. This has two benefits:
- First, it is easier for health-care systems to deal with the disease if the people infected do not all turn up at the same time. Better treatment means fewer deaths; more time allows treatments to be improved.
- Second, the total number of infections through the course of the epidemic can be lower.

#### 5. How can I prevent the spread of coronavirus?

- Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene and keeping your distance from others is the best defence against most viruses. You should:
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash your hands.
- If unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people).
- Stay at home if you are sick
- Cancel or defer large gatherings / large face-to-face meetings
- Stop handshaking and other physical greetings
- Hold meetings via video conferencing or phone call – more information on options will be provided

- Cancel business travel
- If you continue with a meeting keep a good distance and considering meeting outside
- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly
- Take lunch outside rather than in the lunchroom
- Limit food handling and shared food in the workplace

## 6. Why do I need to self-quarantine if I am well?

- There is emerging evidence that some people may be infectious for a short period before they develop symptoms. While this is believed to be uncommon, it does mean that people with COVID-19 may be infectious before they develop obvious symptoms.
- For this reason, **people returning from overseas** must quarantine themselves for 14 days from the date they left the country and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing).
- **Close contacts of people who are confirmed to have COVID-19** must also be quarantined in their home for 14 days after their last contact with the infectious person.
- Being quarantined at home means that you need to **stay at home for the full 14-day period**. You cannot go to work, school, or public areas, such as shops, cafes or restaurants. You need to tell people not to visit you while you are quarantined.
- **Do I need to wear a mask inside my home if I'm being quarantined?**

You do not need to wear a mask while you are inside your home unless you become unwell with symptoms and there are other people living or staying with you. The main symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, sore throat, chills, and shortness of breath.

**For more information on protecting yourself, please refer to this document:**  
<https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/~media/Files/Corporate/general%20documents/Infectious%20diseases/PDF/Coronavirus/Protect%20Yourself%20and%20Others%20Poster.pdf>

- **Do the people I live with need to be quarantined?**

The people you live with and other close contacts do not need to be quarantined, unless they are also close contacts of a confirmed case or have travelled overseas in the past 14 days. Please refer to these guidelines:

<https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/~media/Files/Corporate/general%20documents/Infectious%20diseases/PDF/Coronavirus/How%20to%20Wash%20Hands%20Poster.pdf>

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Dr Russ Harris, author of *The Happiness Trap* has coined the acronym below:

F = Focus on what's in your control  
A = Acknowledge your thoughts & feelings  
C = Come back into your body  
E = Engage in what you're doing

C = Committed action  
O = Opening up  
V = Values  
I = Identify resources  
D = Disinfect & distance

## WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

- 1. Stay connected.** Receiving support and care from others has a powerful effect on helping us cope with challenges. This includes spending time with supportive family and friends and talking through our concerns, thoughts and feelings with others.
- 2. Remember that physical distancing does not need to mean social disconnection.** There are many ways we can use technology to connect with your group and both give and receive support (remotely). You could:
  - Call, text, or video-chat with friends and family
  - Share quick and easy recipes
  - Start a virtual book or movie club
  - Schedule a workout together over video chat
  - Join an online group or peer forum.
- 3. Contribute.** Showing care towards friends, family, or vulnerable people in our community is important during times like this. You could send message of encouragement or affirmation, cook, pack and deliver a meal to someone in your neighbourhood.
- 4. Keep things in perspective.** In a situation that's uncertain, it's natural to have many '*what if?*' questions in our minds. In the absence of information, our anxious mind will often fill in the blanks with worst case scenarios, which can leave us feeling overwhelmed, helpless, or vulnerable. Here are some questions you can ask yourself to shift your thinking from catastrophizing to a more helpful mindset:
  - What are the things within my control?
  - Am I overestimating the likelihood of the worst-case scenario?
  - What strategies have helped me cope with challenging situations in the past that will serve me well during this time?
  - What is a small helpful or positive action that I can take now?

- 5. Seek accurate information.** It is advisable to follow credible sources you to avoid the fear and panic that can be caused by misinformation. These include sources such as the Australian Department of Health, or the Australian Department of Education, Skills, and Employment for advice and/or support.
- Some relevant information may include restrictions on business, organisations activities, events and gatherings in Australia
  - Policies affecting employment and its activities
  - Protecting yourself and others
  - Home isolation and self-quarantine
  - Coping with mental health support T
  - Travel advice.
- 6. Set limits around news and social media.** It's understandable to want to keep informed and prepared. At the same time, constantly reading, watching, or listening to upsetting media coverage can unnecessarily intensify worry and agitation. You could schedule a specific time to check in with the news instead. You may also consider taking breaks from conversations with others about COVID-19 and talking about other topics.
- 7. Maintain good mental health**
- Endeavour to maintain your daily routine as much as possible including regular exercise and a good sleep pattern.
  - Talk to other members of your family, friends or colleagues about the infection. Understanding COVID-19 can reduce anxiety.
  - Think about how much media and social media you are accessing. Constantly watching or listening to information about distressing events can make things feel worse.
  - Be kind to yourself and don't expect to have all the answers, difficult though that might be.
- 8. Tips for those who may be in quarantine or isolation**
- Maintain a positive attitude. Think about how you've managed in other difficult situations and reassure yourself that you will cope with this situation as well. Home quarantine is only temporary.
  - Reassure children using age-appropriate language.
  - If at home with others, consider everyone's needs including have some time alone during the day.
  - Accept that conflict and arguments may occur. Try to resolve them as soon as possible. For young children, distraction may help.
  - Stay in touch with family members and friends by phone, email or social media.
  - Exercise regularly at home as it helps to reduce stress. Options include yoga, floor exercises, dancing, exercise DVDs or online videos, walking around the backyard, and use of a stationary exercise bike.

## SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

In Australia, there are counselling services offered by registered agencies and persons. We recommend the following:

### A. For Crisis Support, General Counselling and Mental Health Support

Organisation	Services Offered	Contacts
<b>Lifeline</b>	Provides crisis counselling and suicide prevention services. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week You can also have an online chat with lifeline	<b>131 114</b>
<b>Suicide Call Back Service</b>	Provides online and phone counselling if you or someone you know is feeling suicidal.	<b>1300 659 467</b>
<b>Beyond Blue</b>	Online and phone mental health support. 24 hour a day, 7 days a week	<b>1300 224 636</b>
<b>Care in Mind</b>	Online and phone counselling for people living, working, or studying in Melbourne's northern, central, and western suburbs. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	<b>1300 096 269</b>
<b>ehedspace</b>	Confidential mental health and wellbeing support for young people (12 - 25 years) and their families, including information, support, and health services. 9am - 1am, 7 days a week	<b>1800 650 890</b>
<b>MensLine Australia</b>	Professional telephone and online support and information service for Australian men. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week	<b>1300 789 978</b>
<b>Mindspot</b>	Free telephone and online service for people with stress, worry, anxiety, low mood or depression. It provides online assessment and treatment for anxiety and depression and can help you find local services. 8am - 8pm, Monday – Friday 8am-6pm, Saturday	<b>1800 614 434</b>

### B. For International Students Health Cover

Insurer	Website	Contacts
<b>AHM OSHC</b>	<a href="http://www.ahmoshc.com">www.ahmoshc.com</a>	<b>134 148</b>
<b>Allianz Global Assistance</b>	<a href="http://www.allianzassistancehealth.com.au/en/student-visa-oshc/">www.allianzassistancehealth.com.au/en/student-visa-oshc/</a>	<b>136 742</b>
<b>BUPA Australia</b>	<a href="http://www.bupa.com.au/health-insurance/oshc">www.bupa.com.au/health-insurance/oshc</a>	<b>1800 888 942</b>
<b>CBHS International Health</b>	<a href="http://www.cbhsinternationalhealth.com.au/overseas-students-oshc">www.cbhsinternationalhealth.com.au/overseas-students-oshc</a>	<b>1300 174 538</b>
<b>Medibank Private</b>	<a href="http://www.medibank.com.au">www.medibank.com.au</a>	<b>1300 419 561</b>
<b>NIB OSHC</b>	<a href="http://www.nib.com.au">www.nib.com.au</a>	<b>131 642</b>

### A. For International Students (additional information about support for students-affected by the coronavirus) can be found at

- [www.studyinaustralia.gov.au](http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au), [www.dese.gov.au](http://www.dese.gov.au) or Email [international.students@dese.gov.au](mailto:international.students@dese.gov.au).
- Update Address: Please update residential address on <https://online.immi.gov.au/lusc/login>
- <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/student-visa/australia>

## WHAT CAN KITWEK ASSOCIATION INC. DO?

Kitwek does not have a welfare package for Covid-19.

However, the Association will endeavour to do the following:

- **Create awareness** in the community by designing customized communication campaigns mindful of language and culture.
- Support **community initiatives** and groups through which members can network and support each other.
- **Liaise** with Kenyan community groups, government departments and the Kenyan High Commission as may be practicable.

## WHAT CAN THE KENYAN HIGH COMMISSION DO?

You are encouraged to contact the Kenyan High Commission for assistance if you have encountered any of the following circumstances as a result of the Covid-19:

- Flight cancellation
- Student visa requiring extension
- Anyone who is offshore and is unable to travel back as a result of the current restrictions
- Students who may need repatriation, such as those whose visas have been cancelled.

The Kenya High Commission consular may be reached at +61 2 6247 4788 and +61 2 6290 7100 or by email on [consular@kenya.asn.au](mailto:consular@kenya.asn.au) or [khc-canberra@kenya.asn.au](mailto:khc-canberra@kenya.asn.au). You may also visit the High Commission website at <https://www.kenya.asn.au/contact>.

Please stay safe.

Regards,

**Kitwek Association Inc. Leadership Team**



## Relevant References

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/what-you-need-to-know-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://services.unimelb.edu.au/counsel/resources/wellbeing/coronavirus-covid-19-managing-stress-and-anxiety>

[https://services.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/3327008/FACE\\_COVID\\_-\\_How\\_to\\_respond\\_effectively\\_to\\_the\\_Corona\\_crisis\\_by\\_Russ\\_Harris\\_author\\_of\\_The\\_Happiness\\_Trap\\_-1.pdf](https://services.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/3327008/FACE_COVID_-_How_to_respond_effectively_to_the_Corona_crisis_by_Russ_Harris_author_of_The_Happiness_Trap_-1.pdf)

<https://online.immi.gov.au/lusc/login>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-19/coronavirus-community-transmission-wa-as-17-new-cases/12072092>