

NCSS COVID-19 RESPONSE and PROCEDURES MARCH 2020

In light of the Global Novel Coronavirus Pandemic, in addition to our routine Infection Control Policy, North Coast Surgical Suite has implemented the following procedures in order to enable us to continue to provide essential medical service to our doctors and their patients whilst maintaining their welfare and that of our staff and other service providers to the practice.

- all staff have completed and passed the Department of Health online training module for Covid 19
- all patients are being requested by either text message or telephone not to present to the consulting rooms if they have any symptoms, or have recently returned from overseas, or have been in close contact with someone meeting those criteria -appropriate alternate arrangements are being made to meet the needs of these patients
- masks are available in reception if someone presents unexpectedly with the above symptoms
- steps have been taken to minimise the number of patients in the waiting room at any one time- patients are requested to call once they have arrived at the carpark and at this time they are advised of an appropriate time frame to actually present to the reception area in person, additionally non-urgent appointments are being delayed to help keep doctors on time and when appropriate telephone consultations are provided instead of face-to face appointments
- there has been increased cleaning of all surfaces in waiting room, reception, consulting rooms, administration areas and staff areas
- magazines, newspapers and toys have been removed from the waiting room
- hand sanitiser is available at all appropriate locations throughout the practice and is taken to outreach clinics as well
- protocols in reception such as not sharing pens and appropriate distancing

- ▣ prominent displaying of appropriate signage from government websites regarding social distancing, COVID 19 risk factors, signs and symptoms and handwashing
- ▣ staff advised to stay away if any of the warning criteria mentioned above are met
- ▣ flexible working arrangements for staff who are immunocompromised
- ▣ If an employee or one of the doctors is diagnosed with COVID-19 they will be required follow the Department of Health's guidelines and minimise risk of transmission by immediately self-isolating- they will not be allowed to attend the workplace, even to collect their personal belongings
- ▣ As the situation is constantly evolving, if an infection occurs, the practice will consult the latest guidelines from the Department of Health and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and speak with the NSW Public Health Unit to determine the most appropriate course of action regarding cleaning and sterilisation, closure of the practice, monitoring of 'close contacts', and contact tracing requirements.