



FACT SHEET

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

NATIONAL HEALTH PLAN

Primary Care – Respiratory Clinics

Up to 100 private practice respiratory clinics will be established to provide dedicated services to people with mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms, in addition to services available within public hospitals and general practices.

Why is this important?

Respiratory clinics will reduce the risk of further transmission of COVID-19, help to optimise the use of available stocks of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and help reduce the pressure on hospital emergency departments.

The clinics will be established in dedicated premises which meet clear criteria, with arrangements to safely manage infection control. They will complement efforts of state and territory clinics at public hospitals.

The clinics will be staffed by existing general practice doctors and nurses and will be funded to assess, test and diagnose respiratory cases, including COVID-19, influenza and pneumonia.

The Primary Health Networks (PHNs) will work with the AMA and the RACGP to identify practices capable of managing the appropriate infection control arrangements, and willing to operate the clinics in a mix of urban, regional and rural settings.

Each PHN will be provided with \$300,000 to assist in identifying and establishing sites, and to continue assisting with distribution of PPE.

Flexible funding will be available to support the setup of dedicated clinics or hybrid clinics:

- Dedicated respiratory clinics, which will receive setup funding of up to \$150,000; and
- Smaller clinics may be established as part of continuing practices through mechanisms such as dedicated entrance or wings, isolation controls, and other innovative models subject to verification of safety and standards.

Who benefits?

The clinics will reduce pressure on public hospitals and primary health providers, while also reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 across the whole community.

Patients with mild to moderate symptoms or those who have recently travelled and are at a higher risk of exposure will be directed to the clinics in their state or territory by the triage hotline (see Triage Hotline factsheet). PHNs will also coordinate with state and territory clinics, and the triage hotline, to ensure clinics are in the appropriate locations and patients are directed to the appropriate clinics.



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How much will this cost?

This will cost \$206.7 million over 2019-20 and 2020-21.