Reporting a COVID-19 outbreak or exposure in residential aged care

20 July 2022

Residential aged care services are required to submit a notification report of a COVID-19 outbreak or exposure via the COVID-19 Support portal.

The department has made enhancements to the notification form to streamline reporting by residential aged care services.

The streamlined template for reporting COVID-19 outbreaks or exposures will be available from **20 July 2022**.

The enhancements include:

- reduction in data reporting fields
- improved navigation and functionality
- incorporating PPE requests as part of the outbreak notification form
- a simplified report closure at the end of an outbreak.

No new data fields have been added to the notification form.

Current outbreak or exposure notifications will automatically transition to the new template.

This COVID-19 Support portal is accessible only via the My Aged Care provider portal.

The COVID-19 Support portal enables providers to progressively update COVID-19 outbreak information in the one place as the situation evolves, including further test results and outbreak closure.

Services with a current COVID-19 outbreak or exposure can request personal protective equipment (PPE) support as part of their outbreak or exposure notification.

The COVID-19 Support Portal also allows immediate notification to the Department of outbreaks and exposures (COVID-19 in staff, resident or a visitor) to expedite the provision of support by the Commonwealth to ensure optimum protection for residents and workers.

Reporting a COVID-19 outbreak or exposure

If a staff member or resident becomes positive with COVID-19, or an exposure from a staff member, resident or visitor occurs at a facility, the provider must immediately:

- notify the Commonwealth through the COVID-19 Outbreak Management form located on the provider portal, and
- notify their state or territory health department.

Residential aged care facility COVID-19 exposure:

The *Communicable Disease Network Australia's National Guidelines for the Prevention, Control and Public Health Management of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Residential Aged*

Care Facilities, defines a COVID-19 exposure in a residential aged care facility COVID-19 as:

- Any case of COVID-19 in staff, resident or a visitor at the facility during their infectious period that does not meet the definition of an outbreak.

A residential aged care facility COVID-19 outbreak is defined as either:

- Two or more residents of a residential care facility who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 via RAT or PCR test within 5 days and has been onsite at the residential aged care facility at any time during their infectious period, or
- Five or more staff, visitors and/or resident of the residential aged care facility diagnosed with COVID-19 through RAT or PCR test within the past 7 days who worked/visited during their infectious period.

Under the _Privacy Act 1988_, de-identified information should be provided to the Commonwealth. It should not include personal or private information that can identify an individual, such as their name, address, date of birth or contact details.

The national guidelines on COVID-19 outbreaks in residential care facilities provide advice to residential aged care facilities on how to control and manage outbreaks.

All approved providers are required to have in place an outbreak management plan; and activate when appropriate.

All states and territories have issued public health directions for aged care providers. Check with you local state or territory health department.

PPE requests

Facilities can request, update or cancel a PPE order through the COVID-19 outbreak management form through the provider portal.

Resources available

Further resources available to assist facilities to report a COVID-19 exposure or outbreak can be found:

- Quick reference guide
- FAQs

Stay up to date

To stay up to date, visit Managing a COVID-19 outbreak in residential aged care | Australian Government Department of Health