

## NSW Health Coronavirus Response

Dear Member,

I am writing to you in relation to NSW Health's response to the risk of coronavirus outbreak.

The HSU has sought advice from the Ministry of Health in relation to the steps they are taking to ensure the safety of health workers. The Ministry of Health has provided the HSU with the document that is provided with this newsletter. The HSU is continuing to seek up to date advice from the Ministry of Health in relation to this issue and will pass on any advice received directly to members.

In unity,



Gerard Hayes  
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD

## Our response to novel coronavirus 2019

NSW Health is responding to an outbreak of a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), first diagnosed in China in December 2019. Information about this new disease is on the NSW Health fact sheet:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/novel-coronavirus.aspx>

As of 22 January 2020, no confirmed cases have been reported in NSW. The risk of infection here is considered low.

We have implemented a range of measures to promptly identify cases of novel coronavirus infection and prevent transmission in NSW.

### Our response:

- Updated GPs, pharmacists, emergency departments, and the broader health system on the situation as it evolves to enable possible cases to be rapidly identified, diagnosed and managed
- Developed diagnostic tests through our Public Health laboratories to rapidly diagnose cases
- Managing any possible cases with appropriate infection control and public health measures to minimise the risk to health care workers and the community
- Supported the Commonwealth to provide advice and assess travellers for illness on the direct flight from Wuhan to Sydney on 23<sup>rd</sup> January
- Provided regular updates to the community, through media briefings, media release and social media including in Mandarin

We are confident these measures have led to the report of cases under investigation. To date none of these have been novel coronavirus.

We are working with NSW Ambulance to transfer anyone under investigation for 2019-nCoV safely, without risking transmission of infection to ambulance or other health care personnel. Similarly our hospitals are able to protect healthcare workers and other personnel, patients and visitors.

A range of resources are available for the public and health professional. Two alerts have been sent to general practitioners and emergency departments. Updated alerts will be continued to be distributed as required:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

Infection with 2019-nCoV is now notifiable under the NSW *Public Health Act 2010*, so doctors and pathology laboratories are required to notify NSW Health of all people suspected to have this infection.

Should a person living in or visiting NSW be confirmed to have 2019-nCoV infection, NSW Health has procedures in place to identify people who have been in contact

with the confirmed case. Those people will be monitored and managed to prevent any further spread of the infection, should they be found to also have 2019-nCoV infection.