

NSW Health Coronavirus Response: Information for Members

Dear Member,

As previously advised to members, the HSU is having regular meetings with NSW Health to monitor and discuss any issues impacting on our members in relation to the coronavirus outbreak. The virus now has a name, COVID-19.

Attached are two documents that have been distributed by NSW Health to assist staff

1. [Advice for healthcare workers, staff, healthcare students and volunteers](#) – this provides guidance about measures more broadly for healthcare workers, staff, healthcare students and volunteers in NSW Health facilities who have returned from travel in mainland China or have transited through a mainland Chinese airport.
2. [Advice for NSW Health staff](#) – this contains similar advice to the above document and provides advice regarding leave provisions for staff.

The HSU requested further clarification of what constitutes “direct patient care” and received the following advice from NSW Health

Patient care areas are all areas of the hospital/facility where direct patient care is delivered. Staff that are required to be excluded from patient care areas for 14 days if they have been to mainland China before 1 Feb are not able to enter patient care areas, nor to be involved in any diagnostic or treatment procedures that are performed directly on the patient. After the exclusion period of 14 days, staff are able to return to work in patient care areas.

If required to exclude from patient care areas for 14 days:

- *Pathology – Staff are able to perform diagnostic procedures if not performed directly on the patient.*
- *Food preparation – Staff are able to prepare food, but cannot deliver the food to patients as this would involve entering a patient care area.*
- *Linen – Staff cannot carry or remove linen from a patient care area.*
- *Sterilising – Staff can sterilise equipment, but cannot enter patient care areas to retrieve the equipment.*
- *Ambulance stations where patient equipment is stored/packed – Staff can enter ambulance stations where patient equipment is stored/packed.*

The HSU will continue to meet with NSW Health weekly to raise any issues. If members have any concerns or are unclear about the procedures, please email Brendan Edghill, Acting Manager Industrial Division at Brendan.edghill@hsu.asn.au

In unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerard Hayes', with a long, sweeping underline.

Gerard Hayes
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD