



Enquiries to: COVID-19 Primary Care
Clinical Excellence Queensland
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Queensland Health

Dear colleagues

I write to advise of important changes to the COVID-19 self-assessment process for Queenslanders.

As this current COVID surge continues to escalate, we need to ensure Queenslanders can access the right level of care via the most streamlined approach. To create a more efficient process, all consumers will be directed to call the National Coronavirus Helpline available 24/7 on 1800 020 080 or alternatively use the online HealthDirect Australia Symptom Checker. The additional option of completing the Queensland Health's COVID Care Self-Checker, which has been available since 3 February 2022, will no longer be available.

Why we are making this change:

Currently, the Queensland Health COVID Care Self-Checker does not have the sensitivity to separate those patients who are moderate risk and high risk, resulting in people being referred to virtual care wards who do not require this level of care, potentially delaying timely access to care for this vulnerable cohort.

Benefits of this change:

The algorithms applied within the HealthDirect Australia (HDA) helpline and the online symptom checker are more sensitive, increasing the ability to link consumers to the right care level they require.

HDA can notify general practitioners (GP) of patients who call and are at moderate risk (with the patient's consent).

HDA offers interpreter service and for patients who do not have access to a GP or do not have a GP, they can link them to a GP Respiratory Clinic (GPRC).

High risk patients identified via the National Coronavirus Helpline (NCH) will continue to be referred to the Hospital and Health Service virtual wards. The NCH will also continue to provide an interpreter service to callers if required.

The HDA symptom checker will continue to be available for those consumers who just want advice.

How it works:

This will be the same patient-initiated process. Links and information will be available on Queensland Health or HealthDirect Australia webpage. These will direct consumers to the following options:

1. HealthDirect Australia phone risk stratification which provides the following services:
 - Low Risk – Advice
 - Moderate Risk – Advice and Offered GP notification
 - High Risk– Advice and the consumer details are sent to Queensland Health virtual wards

2. COVID-19 Symptom Checker for self-assessment and risk stratification where advice will be provided via a pop-up text box based on risk.

Note: both above actions are available to Queenslanders currently.

Thank you for your continued support in the management of patients with COVID in the community.

Should you require more information, please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Health's COVID-19 Primary Care team via email: COVID19_PC@health.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

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