



**Ngangganawili Aboriginal Community Controlled
Health and Medical Services Aboriginal Corporation**

ICN 1870

ABN 85 650 098 620

44 Scotia Street, Wiluna WA 6646
PO Box 40, Wiluna WA 6646
Telephone (08) 9981 8600
Fax: (08) 9981 8660
info@nahs.org.au
www.nahs.org.au

Pandemic Response Plan

1. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Ngangganawili Aboriginal Health Service (NAHS) pandemic influenza plan is to provide an effective health response framework to minimise transmissibility, morbidity and mortality associated with an influenza pandemic and its impacts on our community, and to staff.

The objectives described in this plan reflect the following key aspects:

- ensuring that the health service is prepared for an influenza pandemic by using existing systems and governance mechanisms as the basis of the response
- ensure that the community receive informed and timely education, advice and information.
- minimise transmissibility, morbidity and mortality of influenza and other health risks

This plan is not a complete, step by step, how to do it manual since each crisis situation is unique, with varying levels of threat and business impact.

Amendments made to this plan will be in red font pending subsequent updates.

2. TEAM OBJECTIVES AND COMPOSITION

The role of the Pandemic Response Team is to ensure the continuity of critical activities of NAHS within the stipulated timeframes in the event of a major incident that renders the clinic or external buildings inaccessible or unusable.

Last updated: Friday 29th of January 2021



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Team Composition

Team Leader	Chief Executive Officer
Alternate Team Leader	Practice Manager or Policy & Compliance Manager (as delegated by the CEO)
Team members	Role & Responsibility
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of actual or potential issue in the community to NAHS Board via the Chairperson • Responsible for operational undertakings and the need to move/accommodate patients at the alternate facility. • Responsible for delegation of duties for other team members who are not on site or event of serious injury or other misadventure
Senior Medical Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of plans for treatment of patients with confirmed diagnosis
Practice Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with all Medical Officers and coordination of staff to manage patients during pandemic • Liaise with RFDS, other clinics and/or hospitals to move patients as required • Responsible for re-establishment of all clinical services • Responsibility for ensuring all nursing and paramedic staff have been trained in POC testing for COVID-19
Policy & Compliance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with external bodies such as LARU • Social Media programming • Plan & strategy development • Liaise with Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), Shire and Wiluna WAPOL as required. • Delegation of responsibility for obtaining Exemption notices from the Chief Health Officer for FIFO staff returning from interstate.
Consultant Pharmacist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for ordering and reordering of pharmacy stock and consumables both for the pandemic response area and/or usual operations within the clinic



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3. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Stage	Sub-stage	Characteristics of disease that inform key activities	Response arrangement
Prevention	Prevention	No novel strain detected or emerging strain under initial investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote good personal hygiene measures to health care workers and the general public e.g. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette (cover coughs/sneezes, use of disposable tissues) staying away from others whilst sick.• Promote seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in at-risk and vulnerable groups, in those that may transmit influenza to at-risk and vulnerable groups, and in the general public.• Contribute to influenza surveillance programs.• Contribute to research related to pandemic influenza management strategies.• Collaborate with outlying mine sites and regional neighbours where pandemic strains are more likely to emerge, through surveillance systems and early response to clusters of influenza viruses with pandemic potential.
Preparedness	Preparedness	No novel strain detected or emerging strain under initial investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NAHS need to develop and maintain a health workforce with the skills necessary to implement pandemic response strategies.• NAHS to develop a communication strategy for education of the community



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Stage	Sub-stage	Characteristics of disease that inform key activities	Response arrangement
Response	Standby	Sustained community person to person transmission overseas	Review existing plans and policies
	Initial Action	Cases detected in Australia When initial information about the disease is scarce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence enhanced surveillance to characterise the disease and inform decision-making • Provide information to health care staff, the media and the community • Establish testing clinics, flu clinics (also may be referred to as fever clinics) and mass vaccination clinics.
	Targeted Action (current phase)	When enough is known about the disease to tailor measures to specific needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver health care to affected communities whilst maintaining essential core business. • Isolate confirmed or high-risk cases and contacts in designated healthcare settings and in the community. • Identify and consider use of antiviral agents to cases (treatment) and contacts (pre and post-exposure) and facilitate access as required. • Provide pandemic vaccine when available as per the Australian Government Department of Health • Provide advice to inform SEWB/mental health services to affected persons and communities.
	Stand Down	Virus no longer presents a major public health threat	Stand down enhanced arrangements when appropriate.
Recovery	Recovery	Virus no longer presents a major public health threat	Review plan and lessons learned during the pandemic and make further changes as required.



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4. PANDEMIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

	CLINIC & AGED CARE	NAHS FIFO	MINES/FIFO	CONTAINMENT ISSUES
Strategy	For patients phoning in to the clinic reporting cold or flu symptoms they will require a travel, contacts, and general symptoms history to be taken and a decision then to be made by a clinician as to if they need to present to the clinic, if we send a nurse to the home to see them, or if advice can be provided over the phone.	Staff/contractors/locums travelling in from outside of WA will be required to submit a G2G prior to re-entering the state. NAHS staff travelling in to WA from the Eastern States will be required to quarantine in Perth. Travel exemptions to be sought from the Chief Health Officer for interstate staff as required and dependent on state restrictions as changed from time to time.	Saltlake Potash (SO4) have implemented strategies for the Wiluna community workers and their FIFO employees consistent with the restrictions applicable to their site.	Health and personal care workers are advised to wear masks only when dealing with symptomatic patients. Preference is for patients who require review to be seen at home rather than in the clinic.
	Should there be a positive diagnosis and the patient is moderately affected and require ongoing observation they will be placed into the COVID testing room at the far end of the Wellness Corridor for assessment and if required this will be established as an isolation room.	If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in Wiluna develop staffing management plans to prevent fatigue for onsite staff. Staff outside of Wiluna to remain working from home until virus no longer presents a major public health threat	All travel between the SO4 site, village, and Wiluna town has been recommenced.	For patients presenting to the clinic with cold and/or flu symptoms they should be given a mask, preferably to sit outside while waiting (at least 1.5 to 2 metres away from other patients. Consultations to be undertaken in the patient flow room only.



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Strategy	CLINIC & AGED CARE	NAHS FIFO	MINES/FIFO	CONTAINMENT ISSUES
	Clinic staff will need to be redeployed by the Practice Manager to care for patients in the COVID testing room as required.	All NAHS staff travelling outside of WA are to self-quarantine for 14 days where required. Medical Officers returning from interstate where required will quarantine as state directions require.	Community gatherings have recommenced with COVID restrictions in place as per state regulations.	Touch free thermometers have been purchased.
	Have prepared set up for COVID Testing. This will occur in the ambulance bay or back carpark as the weather dictates.	South Australia now viewed as low risk.	Liaison with Wiluna Remote School to advise and assist with staff health controls when requested to do so.	All NAHS staff have undertaken mandatory COVID-19 Infection control training via the eLearning package distributed by email & added to the training register on LOGIQC
	HACC day clients have been relocated to the “shelter” and their services resumed up there.	Policy & Compliance Manager will continue to liaise with LEMC & Shire as required.		
	If patients in isolation at the HACC centre continue to clinically deteriorate to a moderate – severe clinical presentation or they require ventilation, they will be moved to R2 until RFDS retrieval	Back up Clinical Coordinator nominated to undertake a Clinical lead role ensuring effective flow of work within the clinic environment. This is also a WA Dept of Health LARU requirement as per our Nursing Post license when the Practice Manager is not onsite.		All patients phoning or attending the clinic to be asked a series of risk assessment/screening questions to determine if actions such as isolation or home visit are required. Any ‘yes’ response will trigger clinician involvement as a priority.



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Strategy	CLINIC & AGED CARE	NAHS FIFO	MINES/FIFO	CONTAINMENT ISSUES
	<p>Dedicated entry will be established at rear entrance of the Wellness Clinic for access to the COVID testing room if required.</p>	<p>Staff management plan has been updated to meet the current directions provided by WA Dept of Health to provide a safe working environment throughout the emerging COVID-19 situation. NAHS will ensure employees adhere to personal hygiene standards, social distancing, maximum person limits, adequate cleaning standards and general steps to minimise person-to-person contact.</p>	<p>BHP has approved a Nickel West response plan that will trigger the re-activation of COVID risk management controls aligned with any Government response and/or community transmission levels that will cover the above at lower levels but also more responses akin to what we did in the past if the risk exposure increases significantly.</p>	<p>Communicate houses which have been quarantined as precautionary measure at the morning meeting to ensure all departments are aware when undertaking services in the community.</p>
		<p>MO's returning from SA no longer required to quarantine.</p>	<p>All personnel travelling on Alliance flights with recent interstate travel must complete an online screening form.</p>	<p>Community education plan to be developed to ensure that information is disseminated to all via a range of different medium.</p>
		<p>Staff returning from interstate unable to be carried on Alliance flights and need to come via Skippers. All staff on Alliance flights will be required to wear masks.</p>		<p>Established communications with Wiluna Police and the Shire. Will notify WAPOL of houses under quarantine, both preventative and where any confirmed cases of COVID-19 may be identified to ensure safety of service providers.</p>



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Strategy	CLINIC & AGED CARE	FOOD AND CONSUMABLES	MINES/FIFO	CONTAINMENT ISSUES
	<p>Reception area 1 floor and seats marked barriers now in place and these changes will be communicated as per the Communication Plan. Waiting Room area 2 seats marked for social distancing “Sneeze guards” placed insitu at reception as a barrier for reception staff</p>	<p>Extra ‘Home Chef’ meals have been purchased and stored in HACC to ensure that we are able to continue to provide meals for MOW & HACC day patients as per current routines</p>	<p>Wiluna Mining mine site collecting Point of Care testing samples at the mine site and will bring in to NAHS for the testing to be run using TTANGO. Patient will remain isolated onsite at their village until test results obtained.</p>	<p>Yard maintenance and/or Environmental Health Programs occur only where Social Distancing can be maintained and not in houses where community members are being quarantined.</p>
	<p>Nursing & Health Workers undertaking outreach in the community to provide education and make opportunistic patient assessments and provide soap to houses. PPE utilised as required.</p>	<p>Stock levels maintenance being managed adequately. Good supply of PPE held in stock</p>	<p>Temperature and health checks will no longer be undertaken at the Domestic Terminal T2 Boarding gates for Alliance flights to Mt Keith</p>	<p>Regular (Community Care) Cleaning Program tasks have been recommenced.</p>
	<p>PATS travel has resumed as normal with respect to COVID restrictions of commercial airlines and receiving treating facilities</p>	<p>Adequate supplies currently in place for bottled water, sanitary pads, dishwashing liquid, nappies, and formula.</p>	<p>Completion of the online or manual (hardcopy) COVID Self-Assessment questionnaire will no longer be required for Alliance flights to Mt Keith</p>	<p>NAHS clinic recall bus service has been recommenced. HACC bus only transports clients with respect to Social Distancing.</p>



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Strategy	CLINIC & AGED CARE		MINES/FIFO	CONTAINMENT ISSUES
	<p>When nursing & AHWs consult patients in the home where GP input is required telehealth consultations are to be utilised via electronic means (FaceTime, skype etc) wherever necessary.</p> <p>Communicare has been updated to include Telehealth MBS item numbers for this purpose.</p>		<p>Tracking registers, either as manual records or the online SafeWA app remain in public areas at Leinster town</p>	<p>Influenza Vaccination program was undertaken including outreach for flu vaccinations in outlying remote communities.</p>
	<p>Point of Care testing kits obtained for use with the TTANGO machine to allow for onsite testing to occur.</p> <p>Will need to increase the amount of PPE on imprest for undertaking community testing</p>		<p>BHP will complete COVID testing onsite at Mt Keith and currently complete COVID tests at their medical centres for personnel exhibiting cold or flu symptoms.</p>	
	<p>2 Nursing staff have completed training in POC testing for COVID-19. A further nurse and a paramedic are presently completing training.</p>			



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Strategy	CLINIC & AGED CARE	MINES/FIFO	CONTAINMENT ISSUES
	<p>When a requirement exists for a MO to be in quarantine the following processes will be used for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Maternal & Child Health</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most consults requiring medical input can be undertaken via videoconference • If physical examinations on more complex clients are required the Child Health Nurse and MO will liaise regarding a solution or if the patient requires transfer 2. <u>Aged & Community Care</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any signs of temperature or cough clients, staff are taken to clinic (with a mask on) • Where consultation with the MO is required this will occur from the clinic via videoconference in collaboration with the nursing staff 3. <u>NAHS clinic & Paramedics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telehealth will be utilised for all consults • Nursing staff have direct access to RFDS doctors and SCGH • Consulting room in Wellness wing (TBA) to be the main hub to assess and collect specimens for COVID screening (POC) • Paramedics will access the MO via videoconference as required in consultation with the on-call nurse 		



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Strategy	NAHS FIFO STAFF CONTAINMENT ISSUES
	<p>NAHS staff who have not been outside of WA transiting to and from Wiluna from Perth will comply not only with the Closing the Border Directions set by the WA Government but with any instruction provided by any commercial or private airline. This will be inclusive of the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing of disposable surgical masks on all flights and within any airport terminal including transit across the tarmac to the plane. A fine of up to \$50,000 is in place for individuals who fail to comply. In addition to this fine any refusal by NAHS staff or contractors would result in refusal to travel on Alliance Flights. • The mask can be removed whilst eating or drinking if seated at the time (you can still have a coffee at the airport) • Any NAHS staff member who experiences any one of the following clinical criteria should not return to Wiluna until they have had a COVID-19 test and returned a negative result. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ fever ($\geq 37.50C$) OR history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills), without a known source ○ an acute respiratory infection (e.g. shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, runny nose) ○ acute loss of smell or taste.
	<p>NAHS staff who have been outside of WA to a state with no current restrictions on entry to WA will comply not only with the Closing the Border Directions set by the WA Government but with any instruction provided by any commercial or private airline. This will be inclusive of the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing of disposable surgical masks on all flights and within any airport terminal including transit across the tarmac to the plane. A fine of up to \$50,000 is in place for individuals who fail to comply. In addition to this fine any refusal by NAHS staff or contractors would result in refusal to travel on Alliance Flights. • The mask can be removed whilst eating or drinking if seated at the time • Must comply with any State direction to undergo a COVID-19 test on arrival into WA or any other such direction which may be amended from time to time • Any NAHS staff member who experiences any one of the following clinical criteria should not return to Wiluna until they have had a COVID-19 test and returned a negative result. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ fever ($\geq 37.50C$) OR history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills), without a known source ○ an acute respiratory infection (e.g. shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, runny nose) ○ acute loss of smell or taste.



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	<p>NAHS staff who have been outside of WA to a state with CURRENT BORDER CLOSURES or restrictions must comply with the following requirements prior to their travel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notify the Policy & Compliance Manager of the planned dates for re-entry to WA, the address their return trip will originate from and any additional cross border transit stops to enable an Essential Services Worker exemption to be applied for from the Chief Health Officer (WA Department of Health).• Once an Essential Services Worker exemption letter has been obtained the employee is to apply for a G2G entry pass via the app or at https://www.g2gpass.com.au/apply• FIFO employees are not residents of Wiluna and must not use their Wiluna staff accommodation address for the purpose of obtaining a G2G pass.• The Employee must be willing to comply with any State direction to undergo a COVID-19 test upon their return into WA, and at any other time within the first 14 days back in WA, or to follow any other such direction which may be amended from time to time• If requested to do so be prepared to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test prior to their return to WA.
	<p>NAHS staff who have been outside of WA to a state with CURRENT BORDER CLOSURES or restrictions must comply with the following requirements upon return to WA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Employee must be willing to comply with any State direction to undergo a COVID-19 test upon their arrival into WA, and at any other time within the first 14 days back in WA, or to follow any other such direction from the CHO which may be amended from time to time.• Where a person, subject to a quarantine direction, needs to engage in transport services, all people in the vehicle (including the driver) are required to wear a face mask.• Be prepared to self-quarantine at a suitable premise in Perth for 14 days after re-entering WA.• If travelling by car to Wiluna the most direct route must be taken and stops minimised during the travel. Return trips to Wiluna should not include shopping at any other regional centre or town on route.• The Employee must be willing to comply with any other State Direction issued by the WA Government or CHO which may be issued from time to time.



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8. Other notes and information:

- Contact numbers for all staff and external personnel can be located in LOGIQC system <https://nahs.logicq.com.au/Login?prevurl=/>
- This plan will be updated annually.
- For the purpose of the COVID-19 pandemic response this plan is a living document and responsibility for amendment of all areas rest with the Managers delegated responsibility within the document. The Policy & Compliance Manager will review the plan weekly and update as often as daily as the need arises.