Friday 1 May 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)
Update #8

Vigil to honour overseas nurses, all nurses, midwives and carers encouraged to get tested for COVID-19, large PPE deliveries expected and the COVIDsafe app

Members are encouraged to read our newsflashes and the COVID-19 information for health workers provided on the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Commonwealth Department of Health websites.

Information is updated regularly and at short notice. ANMF has collated the important links all in one place, so you don't have to go looking. Please bookmark and check this page regularly – anmfvic.asn.au/COVID-19

Members with COVID-19-related employment questions can ask via the Member Assistance online inquiry form via anmfvic.asn.au/covid-19. Please read through the information on our website before submitting a question. Member Assistance is no longer taking phone inquiries as ANMF staff are now working remotely. Members with complex inquiries will still have phone contact with staff.

ANMF has written to all private, not-for-profit, local government and stand-alone community health centre employers urging them to follow the DHHS advice in the Coronavirus Guidance Note on Employment-Related Matters (bit.ly/2UhDSU2). This document was last updated on 22 April.

Latest coronavirus statistics in Victoria

As of 30 April 2020, the Victorian Chief Health Officer reported:

- the state's number of COVID-19 cases was 1361 – an increase of 7 since yesterday.

- 18 people are in Victorian hospitals with COVID-19, including 9 in intensive care. 18 people have died.

- 140 cases have an unknown source of infection, an increase of 1 since yesterday. 1,291 people have recovered. More than 115,100 tests have been completed.

View the latest Victorian statistics via bit.ly/34Et8Ug and the latest national statistics via bit.ly/2RyEXX1

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

COVID-19 nurses vigil to honour overseas colleagues

On 12 May Australian and New Zealand nurses and midwives will honour their overseas colleagues who have lost their lives treating and caring for COVID-19 patients.

Federal ANMF is co-ordinating a candlelight vigil which will be pre-recorded and shared at 7pm, 12 May, International Nurses Day.

HOW TO TAKE PART:

1. Film (about 20 seconds) or take a photograph of yourself with or without a candle.
2. You may want to do this in a group (with social distancing) or on your own.
3. You may want to hold up a sign with a message to your colleagues and their friends and families across the globe.

PHOTO AND FILMING TIPS:

- Make sure you are in a well-lit room.
- Hold your phone **horizontally/landscape** (this is really important) and if filming handheld, try and keep your phone as steady as possible.
- Frame yourself so you're looking directly at the camera straight ahead (not looking down at your phone).
- If you are filming – we'll need about 20 seconds.
- Name your photo or video file if possible – with your name, your ward or hospital's name.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR VIDEO OR PHOTOGRAPH:

1. Click on the Dropbox link to upload your photograph or video:
   bit.ly/Vic-vigil
2. Find your video on your device and follow the instructions.
3. The name and email address you are required to provide will not be published.

THE DEADLINE

To be part of the vigil please submit your photos or video by **8.30am, Tuesday 5 May**.

Testing blitz to understand how COVID-19 spreading

On Monday 27 April the Victorian Government announced it would undertake a COVID-19 testing blitz planning 100,000 tests in a fortnight.

The Department of Health and Human Services is rolling out the enhanced screening program to better understand how the virus is spreading in the community and set us up for the potential easing of restrictions.

The more tests that are done, the more data the department has about the prevalence of coronavirus in our community.

The results will inform the Victorian Chief Health Officer's advice about COVID-19 restrictions and state of emergency which are due for review on 11 May. Read the media release bit.ly/2Spspl3

Drive through testing clinics have been set up at shopping centres across Victoria and mobile clinics are visiting workplaces and people's homes. Read the media release via bit.ly/2WeFwXt

People with the mildest of symptoms are encouraged to get tested. The test is bulk billed and there is no cost.

Asymptomatic nurses, midwives and carers encouraged to get tested as part of community testing

As part of the testing blitz the Victorian Chief Health Officer is encouraging anyone without symptoms and who works in a health service or aged care service to voluntarily participate in sample testing. This will inform disease surveillance activity.

Most people who have COVID-19 have symptoms such as cough, fever or sore throat. In many cases these symptoms can be mild.

There is a small chance that you have COVID-19 even though you feel well and don't have any symptoms of the disease.

Healthcare workers have a higher chance of catching COVID-19 due to their exposure to patients and are at higher risk of passing COVID-19 onto sick patients and vulnerable people.

This means nurses, midwives and personal care workers employed in public, private, not-for-profit and local government can now get tested for COVID-19. Testing will help protect health workers, their patients, their family and the community.

The test is bulk billed and there is no cost.

If you have no symptoms you do not need to self-isolate while you wait for your results.

If you are working in a large public or private health service your employer may have a testing clinic on site. For testing clinic locations call the 24-hour hotline 1800 675 398 or visit bit.ly/3f6u6xF for more information, locations and maps.

Mobile drive-through testing clinics are also operating at the following shopping centres:

- Bayside Shopping Centre, Frankston
- Bunnings, West Footscray
- Chadstone Shopping Centre
- Highpoint Shopping Centre
- Northland Shopping Centre

- Pacific Werribee
- Pacific Epping
- Watergardens Town Centre
- Westfield Doncaster
- Westfield Fountain Gate

For more information read 'DHHS Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) – getting tested when you do not have symptoms (asymptomatic testing) - what you need to know' via bit.ly/2WeVr83

Significant deliveries of personal protective equipment arriving

More than 10 million gloves, 16 million surgical masks, two million N95 masks, five million isolation gowns and more than two million face shields and eye protection are due to arrive in Melbourne by the end of next week.

Victorian Heath Minister Jenny Mikakos said PPE supplies were being stored in an 8,000 m2 warehouse in Melbourne's south-east.

She said new orders were arriving at the warehouse every day which are then quickly distributed across the state's health system and quarantine hotels to keep health care workers and staff safe.

Supplies include surgical masks, N95 masks, gloves gowns, hand sanitizer and other vital items that are key to the Victorian Government's coronavirus preparedness response.

In response to the pandemic, the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Purchasing Victoria and Monash Health have developed a centralised approach to procurement, distribution and management of critical medical equipment and consumables to ensure supplies are distributed to where they are needed most.

The government also established a PPE taskforce – bringing together key people from the health sector and the department to ensure access and communications around PPE is informed by experts, clear and consistent.

The Government's $1.9 billion health fund has allowed the state's hospitals to build more bed capacity, secure ICU equipment, staff and space to meet the expected surge in cases and boost the state's stockpile of PPE.

Read the media release via https://bit.ly/2Sp1PIM

ANMF continues to advocate to resolve members' PPE issues

ANMF continues to work to resolve members' personal protective equipment issues via the weekly Safer Care Victoria PPE committee. Stakeholders include Safer Care Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services, WorkSafe Victoria, Victorian Hospitals' Industrial Association and a hospital network representative.

ANMF is currently seeking consistent advice around issues with long- and short-sleeve gowns and plastic aprons.

Members are encouraged to ensure they read the most up-to-date PPE guidance:

1. DHHS COVID-19 – a guide to the conventional use of PPE (updated 20 April) via bit.ly/2yBnmaa

2. DHHS - How to put on (don) and take off (doff) your personal protective equipment (PPE) via bit.ly/2zqYT89

3. DHHS Healthcare worker personal protective equipment guidance for performing clinical procedures (updated 23 April) via bit.ly/3d6HgIW

4. DHHS Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Use of n95 respirators in clinical settings (updated 6 April). via bit.ly/2VPTIqY

5. Federal ANMF evidence brief COVID-19: personal protective equipment (updated 30 April) via bit.ly/3asr5Ed

Members with concerns about PPE should contact ANMF via anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance

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535 Elizabeth Street Melbourne Vic 3000   p 9275 9333   f 9275 9344   regional toll free 1800 133 353   anmfvic.asn.au   records@anmfvic.asn.au

Free hotel accommodation extended to public sector aged care nurses

The Victorian Government has extended its free hotel accommodation program for nurses in public sector residential aged care who need to isolate as a result of COVID-19.

The Federal Government is responsible for residential aged care legislation, regulation, aged care safety and quality standards and funding.

The Victorian Government operates the country's largest number of public residential aged care facilities.

In the announcement on Thursday 30 April Victorian Ageing Minister Luke Donnellan said the expansion would continue to help slow the spread of COVID-19, protect the health system and save lives.

See the government's media release via bit.ly/2Yh3Quj

ANMF is lobbying the Federal Government to provide the same assistance to nurses and carers employed in private-for-profit and not-for-profit residential aged care facilities.

How do I access the accommodation program?
Contact your employer and ask for details. If you require further assistance from ANMF after you have made contact with your employer, please complete an online Member Assistance inquiry form via anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance and include your employer's response.

Residential aged care vaccination requirement

The Federal Government's mandatory flu vaccination requirement for residential aged care workers comes into effect on 1 May. The direction is intended to protect residents.

The Federal Chief Medical Officer says the only absolute contraindication to flu vaccination is a history of previous anaphylaxis following vaccination, those who have had Guillain-Barré Syndrome following previous flu vaccination and people on check point inhibitor drugs for cancer treatment.

People who suffer from egg allergies, unless they have anaphylaxis, can be safely immunised.

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services says the vaccination is mandatory 'if it is available' for the person.

This recognises that for some, a safe vaccine is not available, and for others who simply cannot get vaccinated due to shortages, they are exempt from the direction while those circumstances persist.

Read the Federal Department of Health's Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Restrictions on entry into and visitors to aged care facilities via bit.ly/2zFbzIm

Read ANMF's important vaccination information for aged care members via bit.ly/2Wejjc1

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ANMF encourages members to download COVIDsafe app

On Sunday 26 April the Federal Government released the COVIDsafe app to assist speed up the process of manual COVID-19 contact tracing.

State and territory health officials can only access app information if someone tests positive and agrees to the information in their phone being uploaded. Health officials can only use the app information to help alert those who may need to quarantine or get tested. It will be a criminal offence to use the app any other way.

Federal ANMF Secretary Annie Butler participated in the Federal Government's media conference to promote the app. Ms Butler said the app operated by a Bluetooth handshake 'and right now, it's the only handshake we're allowed to have'.

Members are encouraged to download the voluntary app. Read an ABC explainer via bit.ly/ABC-covidapp

For more information and Google Play and App Store links visit bit.ly/COVIDSafeapp

Clinical assessment modules and an extra $60 CPD online credit for members

The ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre is offering a series of clinical assessment online modules to support nurses wanting to develop their clinical skills in recognising and responding to acute clinical deterioration, including the COVID-19 patient. The 12 one-hour modules on the CPD Portal are:

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 1 - Introduction to acute care / recognising and responding to clinical deterioration
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-1

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 2 - Airway management and unconsciousness
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-2

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 3 - Respiratory failure
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-3

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 4 – Oxygen therapy
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-4

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 5 – Hypotension
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-5

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 6 - Sepsis
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-6

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 7 – Non-invasive ventilation
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-7

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 8 – Mechanical ventilation
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-8

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 9 – Arterial blood gasses
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-9

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ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 10 – Advanced ventilation
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-10

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 11 – Advanced ventilation (prone)
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-11

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 12 – CXR interpretation
anmfvic.asn.au/cam-12

All members receive annual credit to use on the ANMF (Vic Branch) CPD Portal. Full and part-time members receive a $400 annual credit* (or $120 for members on parental leave and $80 for student members).

All ANMF members will receive an additional $60 credit to use on the CPD Portal as a special member benefit during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To access the new online clinical assessment modules, visit cpd.anmfvic.asn.au

Let your colleagues know that ANMF has halved the module price to make it easier for any non-members to complete these important modules. Non-members should click 'non-member login' to log in or create an account.

*ANMF (Vic Branch) members' annual credit is renewed every July.

ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre virtual classroom courses

Information about some ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre courses moving to a virtual classroom was included in the last newsflash. In case you missed it – you can find these courses and registration links via anmfvic.asn.au/virtualclassroom

Reorientation to acute care

As part of its efforts to assist in the preparation of an additional surge workforce, the ANMF (Vic Branch) continues to offer a two-day in-person course for nurses wanting to refresh their skills in the acute sector. More than 100 nurses have attended the workshops and are prepared to work in hospitals in the event a surge workforce is required.

The workshops, generously funded by First State Super, HESTA and the ANMF, are provided at no cost to nurses.

To put your name on the waiting list visit anmfvic.asn.au/reorientation

COVID-19 hardship assistance for ANMF (Vic Branch) members

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a huge economic impact globally and some ANMF members may be experiencing financial hardship. The ANMF (Vic Branch) encourages members who are not able to access payment from their employer and are experiencing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19 to contact us via this form: anmfvic.asn.au/COVID19hardship. All inquiries will be treated with the strictest confidence.

This fund is in addition to the usual assistance members can apply for through the Florence Nightingale Fund.

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