

Friday 28 January 2022

## **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

### **Stage 4 metropolitan maternal and child health COVID 19 surge support for maternity and newborn services**

All metropolitan local government areas have been requested to implement a 'system-wide and time-limited' prioritisation of maternal and child health services effective Friday 28 January 2022.

This significant request came from the Secretary of the Department of Health and State Controller Health and the Chief Executive Officer, Municipal of Association of Victoria (MAV). It recognises Victoria's uniquely triple-qualified maternal and child health nurses.

The request is part of the 19 January 2022 code brown implementation which triggered a co-ordinated response to the crisis across metropolitan and regional Victorian health services experiencing a simultaneous rise in COVID hospitalisations and thousands of furloughed staff. The code brown is expected to last for four to six weeks. A system-wide, coordinated approach is needed to ensure our most vulnerable new mothers/caregivers, infants and families are supported during this period overwhelming demand on health services.

Effective Friday 28 January 2022 until 11 March 2022, maternity services and local government maternal and child health services in metropolitan areas will be working together to prioritise the delivery of essential health services.

Families are being advised of the impact on MCH services. For more information read the Victorian Department of Health documents:

'Maternal and child health information for parents with infants and young children' [Word] <https://bit.ly/32ECtPv>  
'Information for parents on the short-term changes to metropolitan MCH service delivery' [Word]  
<https://bit.ly/3KQzS6w>

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

# Utilising MCH nursing expertise - extended postnatal/ domiciliary care

MCH nurses can be seconded (full- or part-time) for a time-limited period to support either:

1. **Maternity services** by delivering extended postnatal/ domiciliary care visits for new mothers and babies in the community and undertaking:
  - maternal postnatal checks and wound management (if applicable)
  - neonatal observations
  - Newborn Screening Tests (NST)
  - assessment and management of breastfeeding and infant feeding
  - assessment and management of jaundice, including undertaking SBR
  - psychosocial risk assessment and management
  - assessment and management of the sick neonate
  - assessment and management of the unwell mother
  - parentcraft education and safe sleeping
2. **Other metropolitan MCH services** experiencing extreme workforce pressures and increased birth notifications.

## Employment and pay arrangements

MCH nurses can express interest in a full- or part-time secondment with a health service and nominate their preferred days and hours of work. Health services will work flexibly to accommodate your usual or preferred working arrangements. Redeployment is voluntary and only by mutual agreement of the worker, local government and health service.

As part of a secondment to a health service MCH nurses will:

- receive a letter of redeployment from their local government outlining details of the agreed secondment
- receive a one to two-day orientation and ongoing management support
- continue to be paid by local government at their usual rate of pay for the hours they work. (Health services will reimburse local government for the cost of seconded hours).
- have access to all necessary tools and equipment to deliver extended post-natal care
- be fully covered by the health service with appropriate insurance cover
- have the opportunity to work on weekends, including Sundays with commensurate penalty rates
- be eligible for the hospital surge support allowance payments if they meet required criteria. For red zone working environments, including care of COVID-19 patients in maternity service settings, seconded MCH nurses may be eligible for \$60 per shift.

For amber zone working environments, including care of non-COVID-19 patients in maternity service settings, MCH nurses seconded to health services may be eligible for the hospital surge support allowance of \$30 per shift.

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## How to access ANMF support

Members can complete an online Member Assistance inquiry form via [anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance](https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance) (scroll to the bottom of the page).

## COVID-stressed?

While it may feel easier in the short term to muddle through, Nursing and Midwifery Health Program CEO and registered nurse Glenn Taylor says this coping strategy has its limitations. Members are encouraged to contact the free, confidential NMHPV service staffed predominantly by mental health nurses, as well as nurses and midwives with counselling training. One chat may help to reset and decide on some healthy strategies, or you may need ongoing support.

Not ready to call? Reflect on your circumstances and wellbeing and fill out the NMHPV's self-care plan [questionnaire](#). You will be emailed a self-care plan.

Contact NMHPV on 9415 7551 or email [admin@nmhp.org.au](mailto:admin@nmhp.org.au). Find out more at [nmhp.org.au](https://nmhp.org.au).

## Got a colleague not receiving ANMF emails?

If you have an ANMF colleague who is not receiving these newsflash emails, please pass this on and let them know they can re-subscribe via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/resubscribe>

## Encourage your colleagues to join ANMF

Please invite your aged care nursing and personal care worker colleagues to join their union so they have access to support, advice and information about their employment. Let them know they can join via <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/join>

## Important COVID-19 links for nurses, midwives and personal care workers

ANMF continues to collate the important links all in one place, so you don't have to go looking. Please bookmark and check this page regularly – <https://anmfvic.asn.au/COVID-19>

*Please note: this newsflash has been sent for information purposes to midwifery members at Monash Health, Northern Health and Peninsula Health.*

**ANMF Job Reps and Health and Safety Reps are encouraged to display this newsflash on their workplace noticeboard.**

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