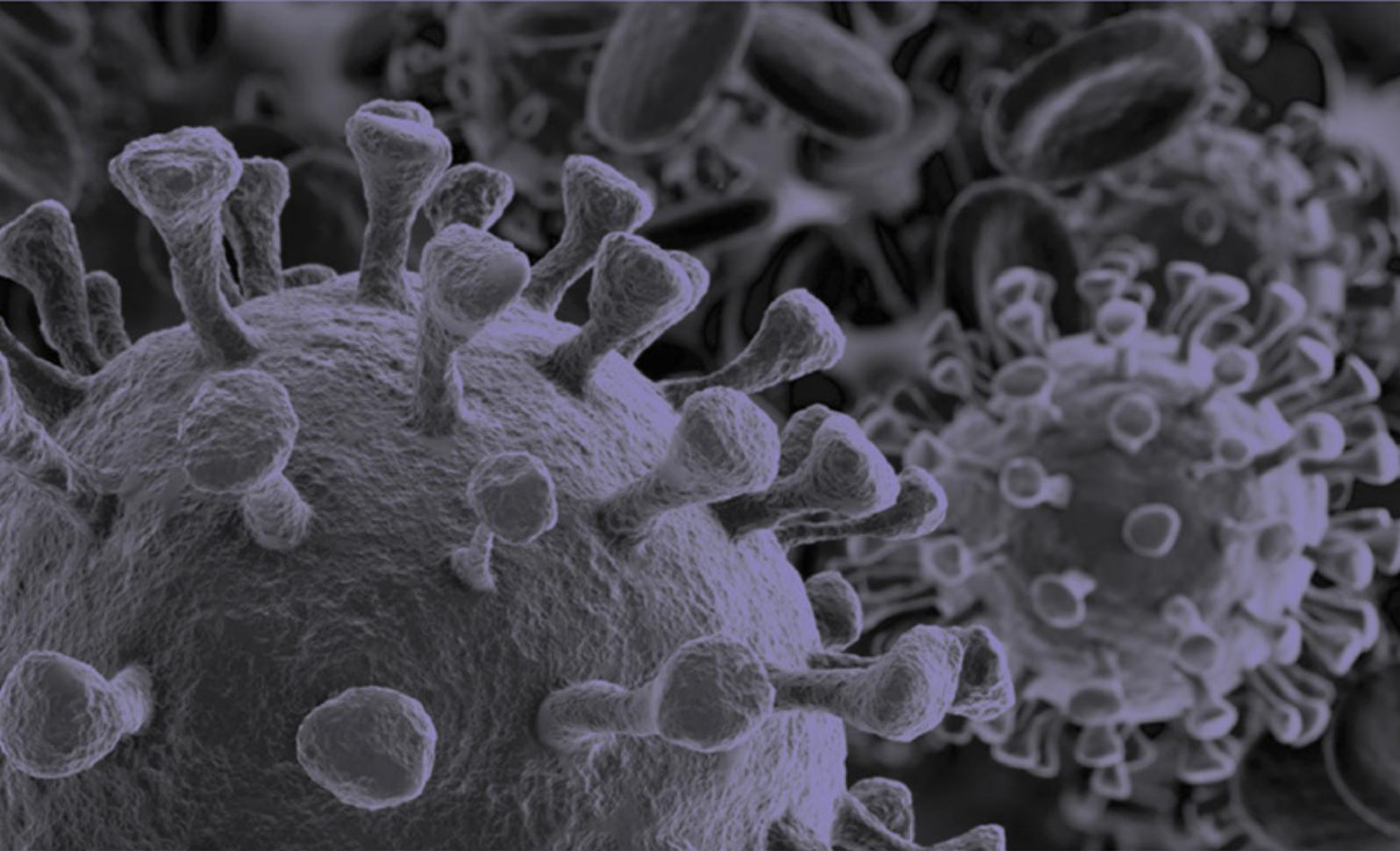




**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health**



# Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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**Our plan for keeping people with disability safe**

**Easy Read version**



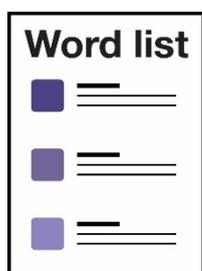
## How to use this plan



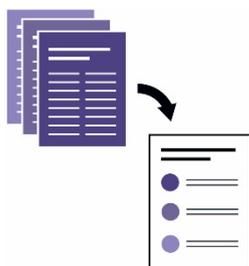
The Australian Government Department of Health wrote this plan. When you see the word 'we', it means the Department of Health.



We have written this plan in an easy to read way.  
We use pictures to explain some ideas.



We have written some words in **bold**.  
We explain what these words mean.  
There is a list of these words on page 30.



This Easy Read plan is a summary of another document.



You can find the other document on our website at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)



You can ask for help to read this plan.  
A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



Do you have a question about coronavirus (COVID-19)?



Help for you is here.



Contact the Disability Information Helpline on **1800 643 787**.

It's available:



- Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm (AEST)



- Saturday and Sunday 9am to 7pm (AEST).



It's not available on national public holidays.

## What's in this plan?

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## We will help people with disability during the pandemic



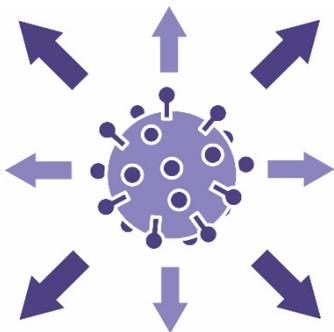
Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a **virus** that has affected many people around the world.



A virus is an illness or disease that can spread easily from one person to another person.



Coronavirus has been called a **pandemic**.



A virus becomes a pandemic when it spreads quickly to lots of countries around the world.



We want to make sure all Australians can get the health care they need during the pandemic.



This includes people with disability and their families and carers.

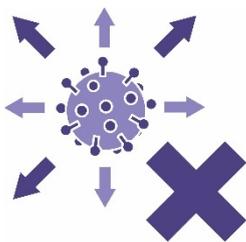


We have a plan to make sure all Australians are supported.

Our plan includes:



- protecting people with disability



- slowing the spread of coronavirus.



There are new rules about the way people with disability can get support, including:

- when you can leave your home
- what supports you can get away from your home.



People with disability have the right to the same standard of health care as other people.

Some people have more risk of getting coronavirus, including:



- people with disability



- people who already have an illness, like cancer or diabetes



- older people



- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples



- people who live in group homes



- people who live in detention facilities.



Some people with disability who catch coronavirus might get very sick.



People with disability are more likely to be affected by **respiratory diseases** like:

- asthma
- pneumonia.



Respiratory diseases are diseases that affect:

- your lungs
- how well you breathe.



Coronavirus also affects:

- your lungs
- how well you breathe.



But there are other things that can put people with disability at risk as well.



For example, you might not be able to find up-to-date information about coronavirus.



You might need to have close contact with people from outside your home who support you.

There is also a higher risk of people with disability experiencing:



- **abuse** – if someone is treating you badly



- **neglect** – if someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you



- **exploitation** – if someone is taking advantage of you.



These things can happen at:

- home
- work
- a group home.



If any of these things are happening to you,  
you can get support.



The support is free and private.



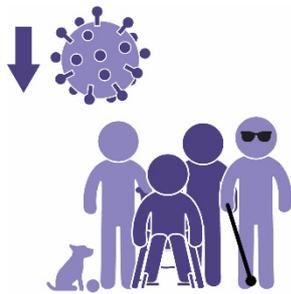
Call the National Counselling and Referral Service  
on **1800 421 468** for support.



In an emergency, call **000**.

## What we want to achieve

We want to:



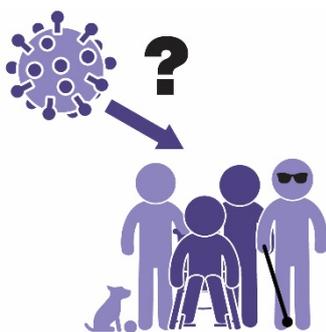
- reduce the number of people with disability who get coronavirus



- support people with disability who get coronavirus



- make sure the community gets the information it needs about coronavirus



- learn more about how coronavirus affects people with disability



- support people with disability so they can still get the supports and services they need.



We know that people with disability need information:

- that is clear and easy to understand
- in formats that are right for them.



We need to support:

- families
- carers
- support workers.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability need support too.



We need to protect the mental health of:

- people with disability
- their families.



We will work together with:

- state and territory governments
- people who work in health care
- people who support people with disability.



All organisations will work together, including:

- disability organisations
- health care organisations.



Each group will need to do different things to make sure our plan works.



We explain what each group will do on the following pages.

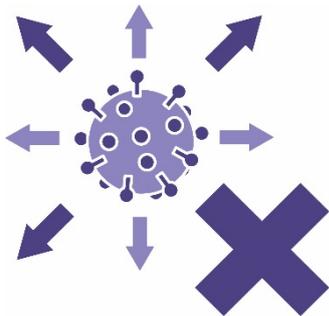
## What the Australian Government will do



We will publish information that is easy for everyone to understand.



We will protect the rights of people with disability.



We are working on the best ways to slow the spread of coronavirus.



We will work with state and territory governments to share information, equipment and tools.



We are also making plans for life after the pandemic.

## What the state and territory governments will do

State and territory governments will:



- create plans that meet the needs of people with disability



- give people who live in their states and territories information that meets their needs



- collect data on coronavirus in their own state or territory



- protect the rights of people with disability



- share information and resources



- organise health care services for people who get coronavirus.

## What people who work in health care will do



As the people who work in health plan and act to fight coronavirus, they will include:

- people with disability
- families
- carers.



They will share information about how to slow the spread of coronavirus.



They will train their staff about coronavirus.



And they will share information about life after the pandemic with the whole community.

## What people who support people with disability will do

People who support people with disability will:



- take part in planning for coronavirus



- share information about how to slow the spread of coronavirus



- train their staff about coronavirus



- share information about life after the pandemic with the whole community.

## How will we achieve our goals?

We will take these steps to achieve our goals:



1. Getting ready
2. Taking action
3. Going back to normal

### 1. Getting ready



**We need to prepare and support everyone who works in health care.**

People who work in health care need training about:



- the rights of people with disability



- how to support:
  - people with disability
  - families
  - carers.

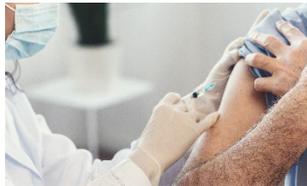
This training should be about:



- better ways to test people with disability for coronavirus



- when supports should be delivered:
  - at home
  - in a hospital



- why **flu vaccines** are important for people who support people with disability.



A flu vaccine is an injection that a doctor gives you to protect you from the flu.



**We need to help organisations who support people with disability.**



People who support people with disability need information about the best way to protect against coronavirus.



This includes:

- how to keep things really clean
- how to use protective equipment like masks and gloves the right way

They need to know:



- what to do if they think someone might have coronavirus



- how to make sure people with disability can still get support and medications



- why people with disability are more at risk of getting coronavirus



- why flu vaccines are important for people who support people with disability.



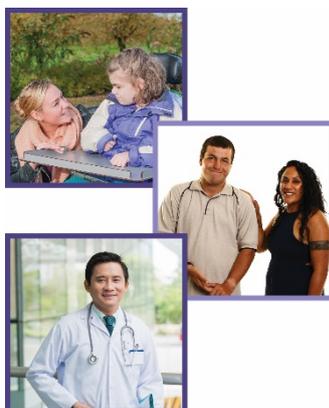
**We need to work out what items and equipment people need.**



The National Medical Stockpile is a collection of important medical equipment.



We use the National Medical Stockpile to make sure people have equipment they need, like masks and gloves.



People who might need this equipment include:

- carers
- support workers
- people who work in health care.



People also need to know how to use this equipment the right way.



**People with disability must still get the supports they need during the pandemic.**

They might also need:



- extra support



- different ways to get health care



- different ways to test for coronavirus



- someone to check on them to make sure they have the supports they need.

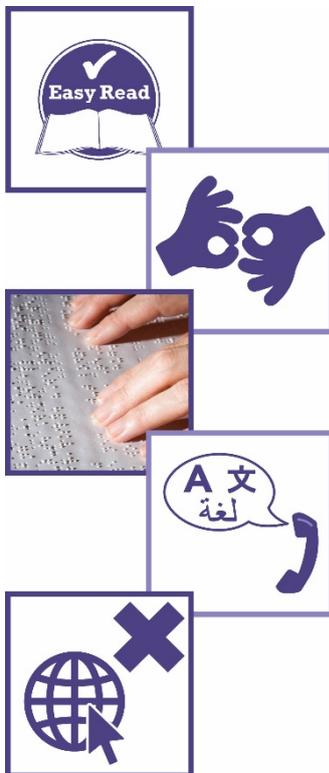


**We need to create clear information that is easy to understand.**



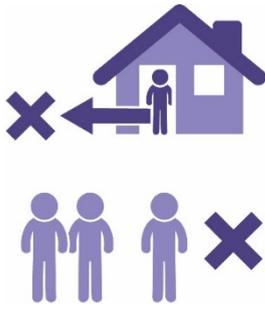
All information about coronavirus needs to be **accessible**.

Accessible information includes different formats, such as:



- Easy Read
- Auslan
- Braille
- Translation Information Services (TIS) – a phone number where you can get information in other languages
- sharing information in ways that don't rely on the internet.

The information needs to clearly explain:



- how to **self-isolate** at home

If you self-isolate, you don't leave your home.



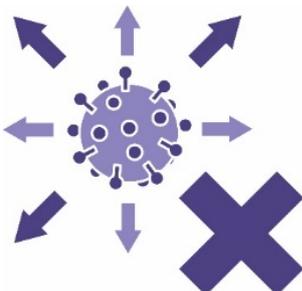
- how to use protective equipment like masks and gloves the right way



- how to protect your mental health



- what to do if you think you might have coronavirus



- the best ways for people with disability to slow the spread of coronavirus.

This includes people who live in group homes.

## 2. Taking action



As time goes on, we want to:

- help people to recover
- stop coronavirus from spreading further.

### What do we need to do?

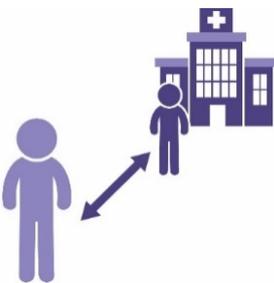
We might need to support people with disability who are sick so we can protect them, such as by:



- calling their doctor on the phone instead of visiting



- testing for coronavirus in different ways



- keeping people away from others if they must go to hospital



- making sure people with disability who live far away from cities and towns can still get the health care they need.



**We need to test for new cases of coronavirus as early as possible.**



We must make sure everyone knows what to do if they think they might have coronavirus.

They should know:



- to get tested as soon as possible



- who to call to get tested



- who to call to get more information

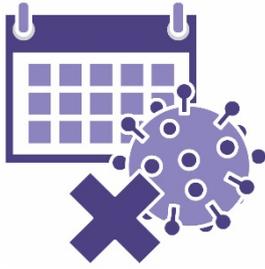


- how to get support if they are sick



- how to self-isolate and get the support they need while they are at home.

### 3. Life after the pandemic



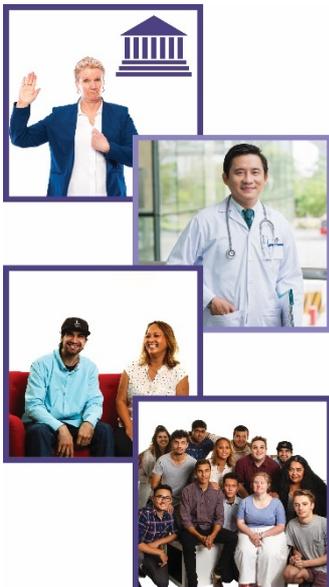
In the coming months, the pandemic will end.



Many parts of life will return to the way they were before.



This could take a long time.



As life returns to the way it was, we need to share information with:

- state and territory governments
- people who work in health care
- people who support people with disability
- the community.

If people have the right information, they will be able to:



- protect themselves and their families
- protect people who are at risk, including people with disability.



People who are at risk need to protect themselves as we start going back out into the community.



As time goes on, we must look at what we:

- are doing well
- what we can do better.

## Word list



### **Abuse**

Abuse is when someone treats you badly.



### **Accessible**

When something is accessible, everyone can use it.



### **Exploitation**

Exploitation is when someone takes advantage of you.



### **Flu vaccine**

A flu vaccine is an injection that a doctor gives you to protect you from the flu.



### **Neglect**

Neglect is when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you.



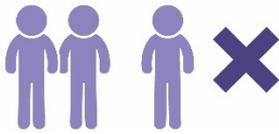
## **Pandemic**

A pandemic happens when a virus spreads quickly to lots of countries around the world.



## **Self-isolate**

If you self-isolate, you don't leave your home.



## **Respiratory disease**

Respiratory diseases are diseases that affect:

- your lungs
- how well you breathe.



## **Rights**

Your rights are rules about how you can expect to be treated.



## **Virus**

A virus is an illness or disease that can spread easily from one person to another person.

## Contact us



Do you have a question about coronavirus (COVID-19)?



Help for you is here.



Contact the Disability Information Helpline on **1800 643 787**.



You can find more information online at:

[www.dss.gov.au/disabilityhelp](http://www.dss.gov.au/disabilityhelp)

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)



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