



Patient relives COVID pain

Newport mother-of-two Kimberly Hanrahan has undergone an experimental plasma treatment as she recovers from COVID-19.

Ms Hanrahan, 48, said she contracted the virus after a cleaner came to her home.

The owner of the cleaning company called to advise that her son had tested positive at school.

Ms Hanrahan said her husband, Dave, had a sore throat and underwent a COVID-19 test.

After five days, his test came back positive.

Ms Hanrahan was then tested with her eight-year-old twin boys.

"I was positive and they were negative, thank goodness," she said. "Then, I got all the usual sort of symptoms – a sore throat and a lack of smell and taste – but then I got really quite poorly ... really severe migraines and body aches and pains and back aches."

She called Altona North Respiratory Clinic and said, "It's day 11, is this normal?"

Ms Hanrahan said she was told it was normal.

"I called my doctor on the Wednesday because I was in so much pain. I hadn't slept properly and he gave me some Panadeine Forte, which was great," she said.

"On the Thursday, the DHHS called me ... I got quite upset and said, I feel like I can't talk to you properly, I've got a real shortness of breath, I don't feel very well.

"He just said, 'I'm going to put the phone down, I'm going to call your husband and get him to call an ambulance for you'.

"I was avoiding going to hospital. I didn't want to go if my symptoms were just normal.

"You just don't know, how bad is bad enough to go to hospital?"

Ms Hanrahan was admitted to Footscray Hospital and "zipped up" in a room.

"I spent the next 11 days in hospital," Ms Hanrahan said.

"I went in on August 13 ... went into ICU the next day but then was on oxygen for the whole time until I came out of ICU, and then for a couple of days after that. Thankfully I didn't have to go on a ventilator.

"I was in ICU for six days.

"The nurses, everybody, was amazing – they put themselves at risk every day.

"A lot of them that I spoke to had actually come out of what they were doing ... and then got retrained to come into ICU because of the demand."

Ms Hanrahan said each day she was given a mask to enable her to breathe.

"Essentially, this mask that covers your whole face, it's very tight around your head so you can't get any air in it and then it's like a wind tunnel so it's like air being pushed down into your lungs because my lungs had collapsed," she said. "That was five times a day for a couple of hours a day."

Ms Hanrahan said she had a transfusion of what's known as "convalescent plasma", which contains antibodies from people who have recovered from COVID-19.

"I did get the symptoms back again when I was home ... headache and sore throat and runny nose came back again," she said.

"I don't know yet if there's been any long term damage to my organs. We don't know for sure – it's new for everybody."

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Kimberly Hanrahan is now recovering at home. (Joe Mastroianni) 215844_05 **Inset:** Ms Hanrahan while being treated at hospital. (Supplied)