

# Discharge of a COVID-19 Positive or Suspected Patient

Updated 9 May 2022



Western Health

COVID - 19

Be Safe -- Be Smart -- Be Kind

## Facilitating discharge

- Following discharge home the patient must maintain home isolation until they complete 7 days of isolation, after which they will automatically be cleared from isolation. They do not need to be cleared by the LPHU. De-isolated patients can return home without isolation.
- If a confirmed case of COVID-19 is being discharged while still infectious the ward should also,
  - Inform Health Direct of vulnerable cases who may require prioritization for COVID-19 Positive Pathways Program by emailing [CCMSoperations@healthdirect.org.au](mailto:CCMSoperations@healthdirect.org.au). Note that all cases are automatically registered for the COVID-19 Positive Pathways Program run by Health Direct.
  - Clarify whether there are other positive cases at the discharge location (e.g. patient's home). If there are no other positive cases, ensure the patient understands that by moving to this discharge location increases the risk for co residents, particularly if they are vulnerable. Patients should be encouraged to explore options for isolation that do not place others at risk. Alternative accommodation options can be discussed, such as hotel quarantine.
  - Referral to the Victorian Quarantine Hub in Mickleham can be made with the consent of the case by completing the referral at <https://iatsnotification.justice.vic.gov.au/>
  - Inform the case that they may not be able to leave the emergency accommodation if they change their mind, prior to the end of their isolation period. Document the advice about the possibility that even if they change their mind, the Quarantine Hub may not let them leave.
- In the context the patient presents with a complex situation requiring public health advice, the WPHU medical lead can be contacted by emailing [WPHU@wh.org.au](mailto:WPHU@wh.org.au)
- For all confirmed COVID-19 cases the MO must complete the EMR form: "COVID-19 Discharge form (For WHO Reporting)", in addition to the standard discharge summary
- Please ensure all the relevant paperwork is given to the patient, including relevant COVID-19 DH information sheets
  - Information for close contacts/ suspected COVID-19 case <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/what-do-if-you-are-close-contact>
  - Information for COVID positive cases <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/what-to-do-if-you-have-covid-19>

## Transporting patients within Western Health

Refer to the QRG on 'Transporting of patient and handling of patient belongings' on [Western Health Coronavirus Site](#) for information relating to transporting patients within Western Health.

## Transporting the COVID-19 suspected or confirmed patient from hospital to home

### Transport via family/ friend

Where patients are transported home with a family member/ friend, the driver and patient should be provided with a surgical mask to wear. If possible, the patient should sit in the back seat diagonal from the driver with the windows open and vehicle air-conditioning set to fresh air to optimise ventilation.

### Transport of COVID-19 positive ambulant patients

The National Patient Transport (NPT) IMAX service is available to transfer COVID-19 positive patients to and from Western Health Emergency Departments and COVID-19 wards. The IMAX service can also facilitate discharge home for COVID-19 positive patients who are fully ambulant but have no social support to pick them up, and/or do not hold pension/concession card or AV subscription. The IMAX vehicle can transfer up to 2 COVID-19 positive patients at any one time.

This service is available from 8:00AM – 6:00PM Monday to Sunday. Outside of these hours, or if NPT is unable to staff the IMAX vehicle, NPT will assign the job to a hoist/stretchers vehicle instead. On request, NPT crew are permitted to access Western Health PPE supply.

### Patient eligibility criteria

To be eligible for NPT IMAX transport patients:

- Must be able to self-transfer in and out of a vehicle
  - o Note this involves 3 steps into/out of the vehicle
- Must not require any physical or medical assistance or monitoring
- Must not have any other relevant comorbidities or infectious diseases
- Are compliant in following instructions
- Have no history of aggression (verbal or physical)
- Must wear an N95 mask and face shield for the duration of the trip. PPE is to be provided by Western Health.
- Patients are only permitted to carry one small carry on size luggage and/ or personal item with them. It is the patient's responsibility to handle their luggage on and off the vehicle
- The IMAX also caters for discharge home of COVID-19 positive patients where they are fully ambulant but have no social support to pick them up, and/or do not hold pension/concession cards or AV subscription.

### Pick up and drop off locations

Patients must be transferred by Western Health staff to the pickup point. NPT will remain outside of the hospital whilst waiting for the patient.

### Sunshine

- JKWC Ambulance Bay
- ED Ambulance Bay

### Footscray

- Outpatients entrance
- ED Ambulance Bay

### Bookings

Booking can be made via NPT's RealTime online booking system, noting COVID +ve for IMAX bus in the booking details. This service is available from 8:00AM – 6:00PM Monday to Sunday. Outside of these hours, or if NPT is unable to staff the IMAX vehicle, NPT will assign the job to a hoist/stretchers vehicle instead.

### Transport of SCOVID and all other COVID-19 positive patients

- Low acuity ambulant patients who have no other means of transport, and are not eligible for NPT IMAX transport may be transported by the Emergency Management Unit (EMU) who are contactable on 1300 565 115
- All other patients can be transported through the normal patient transport options; bookings are via <http://inside.wh.org.au/departmentsandservices/HealthSupportServices/Pages/Non-Emergency-Patient-Transport.aspx>.

### Transporting the COVID-19 suspected or confirmed patient from home to hospital

- Low acuity ambulant patients who are isolating at home can access Ambulance Victoria transport to get to/ from medical appointments. To arrange this please contact the Emergency Management Unit (EMU) on 1300 565 115.

### COVID-19 positive patients presenting a risk to the community

If a COVID-19 positive patient presents a risk to the community, consideration should be given to early referral to the State Emergency Management Centre (SEMC) DHHS, [semc@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:semc@health.vic.gov.au) so a comprehensive assessment can be completed. Following liaison with the patient, The ACE Care Coordinator will make the referral to SEMC in consultation with the medical and multidisciplinary team. In the event it is determined that a patient is at imminent risk of homelessness or has a particular circumstance that makes isolation at home unachievable a referral to hotel quarantine may be completed by the SEMC team.

### Missing patient and discharge against medical advice

- Patients suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 who are missing or wish to discharge against medical advice pose a potential risk to themselves and the community. The treating medical team should follow the guidance in the Clinical Guidelines, which applies to all inpatients aged 16 years or older
- If a patient is missing, ward staff should inform the Nurse in Charge (NIC) and search the immediate area. If not found the NIC will then notify security, operations manager/Divisional Director (out of hours After Hours Administrator (AHA)) and family/power of attorney/guardian) and where necessary patient welfare check. If the patient does not meet the criteria for community-based clearance for COVID-19 this should also be escalated to the LPHU at [WPHU@wh.org.au](mailto:WPHU@wh.org.au).
- If COVID-19 positive patients present a risk to the community referral should be made to the State Emergency Management Centre (SEMC) DHHS, [semc@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:semc@health.vic.gov.au) so a comprehensive assessment can be completed. In the event it is determined that a patient is at imminent risk of homelessness or has a particular circumstance that makes isolation at home unachievable a referral to Victorian Quarantine Hub can be completed..