

## APA COVID-19 Update – 17 September 2020

### Key messages

- The APA is meeting with MPs and Senators from across the political spectrum to advocate for an amendment of the Aged Care Funding Instrument and ongoing telehealth funding.
- The Federal Government is expected to announce an extension of MBS-funded telehealth, possibly until the end of March. The APA is also calling for permanent funding and has convened a roundtable of key stakeholders to share evidence and understand how best to support members in telehealth education and use.
- We would like to promote the importance of physiotherapy for veterans and war widows during Veterans' Week (24 October-1 November). Please contact us if you would like to be involved.
- Don't miss out on the month's InMotion celebrating our 28,600 members!

| Latest advocacy and emerging issues          |  |          |   |
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| Area   | Action   | Deadline | Details   |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health | <p>The Coalition of Peaks recently met with all governments and the local government association to talk about the implementation of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. This was the first meeting of the Partnership Working Group since the National Agreement was signed and came into effect on 27 July 2020.</p> <p>The National Justice Project, National Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) and UTS Jumbunna have worked together to clarify and communicate restrictions relating to COVID-19 activities for First Nations people living in remote communities across the country.</p> <p>Key information being shared by the National Justice Project, NATSILS and UTS Jumbunna addresses rights and restrictions applying to metropolitan areas and remote Aboriginal communities, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• caring for Elders</li> <li>• community events including Sorry business and funerals</li> <li>• restricted movement in and out of remote communities</li> <li>• police enforcement powers and penalties and how best to respond to police requests.</li> </ul> |          | <p><a href="#">Website</a></p> <p><a href="#">Website</a></p> |
| Aged care                                    | The APA is meeting with numerous MPs and Senators to advocate for an amendment to enable full scope of physiotherapy practice to help address the impacts of long-term confinement during COVID-19 on aged care residents.   |          |   |

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| Digital health | <p>We are providing feedback on a new Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre (DHCRC) discussion paper and have been invited to represent the profession as part of its Reimagined Healthcare project.</p> <p>The Reimagining Healthcare collaboration commenced this week on Thursday with an encouraging start, a national webinar featuring keynote speakers including the Commonwealth Health Department Secretary, Professor Brendan Murphy, which drew 1,700 plus registrants.</p>   |   | <p><a href="#">Paper</a></p> <p><a href="#">Webinar</a></p>                      |
| DVA            | <p>APA attended DVA's health provider forum this week. We sought clarification about ongoing provision of telehealth funding. DVA confirmed it would follow any Department of Health moves.</p> <p>The new Veterans Card final issue is nearing completion. Clients can continue to use their old cards until new ones arrive.</p> <p>A new 1800 VETERANS help line is now available for clients that will transfer veterans to the relevant assistance as the department moves toward a single contact number. The 1800 number for providers has not changed.</p> <p>Veterans Week will be held from 24 October to 1 November and the theme is social connection. This is an opportunity to highlight the important role of physiotherapists in providing social connection via care. We would like to highlight the work of our members with veterans. If you work with veterans and would like to be featured in our communications during Veterans' Week, please contact <a href="mailto:mirjana.jovetic@australian.physio">mirjana.jovetic@australian.physio</a></p> |   |  |
| Compensables   | <p>TAC has announced it will extend telehealth until further notice. It was previously scheduled to end on 30 September.</p>  |   | <p>For details visit <a href="#">What we can pay for</a> on the TAC website.</p> |
| NDIS           | <p>Minister Robert has released an update on NDIS participants and COVID-19 numbers.</p> <p><u>Submissions</u></p> <p>We have recently provided a submission to the Joint Standing Committee's inquiry into the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.</p> <p>We have also provided a submission to the NDIA on Support Coordinators. The APA will put in a submission to DSS on the Disability Strategy.</p> <p><u>Projects</u></p> <p>The APA has been involved in discussions with senior NDIA officials regarding concerns relating to the scope and timelines of the Independent Assessor project that was due for roll-out at the start of October. The NDIA have confirmed that</p>   | <p>16 Sept</p> <p>28 Aug</p> <p>13 Sept</p> <p>30 Oct</p> | <p><a href="#">Media Release</a></p>   |

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|  | <p>the pilot has been extended and that the timelines for the National roll-out have been extended, and is now planned for February 2021. Discussions with the NDIA will continue to address concerns raised by the APA and other Peak Bodies.</p> <p>Content development for the online modules for the JMF grant are almost complete and are currently undergoing peer review. The course should be publicly available at the end of October. Filming for the awareness campaign is currently on hold, due to government restrictions in Victoria.</p>   |        |                         |
| Preventative health                                    | The APA will put in a submission to the DoH on the National Preventive Health Strategy consultation paper. The Strategy forms part of the third pillar for mental health and preventive health outlined in Australia's Long-Term National Health Plan. The consultation paper outlines the overarching, long-term approach to prevention and how this might be done.   | 28 Sep |                         |
| Rural health   | The APA is proud to be a partner with the peak body Services for Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH). Stay tuned for further updates on what this means to members.  |        | <a href="#">Website</a> |
| Private health insurance                               | The APA hosted Private Health Care Australia to present to the PHI reference group on current trends, data and opportunities into the future.  |        |                         |
| 10-year Primary Healthcare Strategy steering committee | There is an Allied Health round table on the 18 September of which the APA is represented. The APA is represented at the Primary Healthcare steering committee, which will help to improve patient-centered care, the quality of care, the efficiency and effectiveness of the health system.  |        |                         |
| Telehealth   | <p>The APA continues to advocate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an extension of MBS and DVA funded telehealth</li> <li>• an extension will enable current research into the effectiveness of telehealth to be concluded and further research to be undertaken to inform future decisions</li> <li>• Commitment to ensuring the telehealth service delivery is safe and effective, and call for an evidence-based approach to underpin permanent access to telehealth for consumers.</li> </ul> <p>We are currently undertaking a number of political meetings with MPs and Senators to advocate for telehealth.</p> |        |                         |

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|  | The APA facilitated a telehealth round table on the 16 September with a wide range of stakeholders.<br>Attendees included Allied Health Professions Australia, Melbourne, Flinders and Queensland Universities, Consumer Health Forum Australia, HCF, Victoria's Transport Accident Commission, National Disability Insurance Scheme, National Rural Health Alliance, Motor Accident Insurance Commission, Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health, Digital Health and the Physio Co.  |  |  |
| Victorian COVID-19 restrictions                                | The DHHS has written to providers to outline the details about the slight easing of restrictions after 28 September.  |  | Letter   |
| <b>Professional development</b>                                |   |  |  |
| Free online learning modules                                   | There are 80 free member eTalks and online learning modules available. The learning modules can be found in the eTalks category and a new category on cpd4physio called Free Learning.  |  | <a href="#">CPD4Physios</a>                            |
| Live lecture series  | To ensure that learning can continue during these times, we are pleased to introduce our new online APA Lectures – Live, which is essentially our usual evening lectures that are now being delivered live online.  |  | <a href="#">Details</a>                                |
| Professional Development (PD)                                  | Our library of online professional development offerings is continuing to grow. Head to <a href="http://www.cpd4physios.com.au">www.cpd4physios.com.au</a> .<br>We are also constantly monitoring and adjusting to jurisdictional restrictions to be able to safely deliver face-to-face PD where possible. The safety of our participants, members and communities is our top priority. As such, several new protocols have been introduced throughout our training facilities to adhere to the COVID-19 Safety Plan. See our current list of face-to-face PD at <a href="https://australian.physio/pd">https://australian.physio/pd</a><br>Alternative methods of delivering our traditional face-to-face courses is being evaluated. |  | <a href="#">Details</a><br><br><a href="#">Details</a> |
| <b>Communications</b>  |   |  |  |
| World Physio Day   | Tuesday 8 September. This year's theme focused on the integral role physiotherapists play in medical teams treating and rehabilitating patients recovering from severe respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19.   |  | <a href="#">Media release</a>                          |
| APA position on extension of Stage 4 restrictions in Melbourne | Call for physios to use clinical judgement to treat patients in need.   |  | <a href="#">Media release</a>                          |
| TAS: COVID-19 pandemic preparedness toolkit                    | Primary Health Tasmania has developed a 25-page toolkit to support primary healthcare settings with COVID-19 pandemic preparedness and response.  |  | <a href="#">Weblink</a>                                |

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| VIC: Protecting our healthcare workers               | DHHS presents the latest understanding of COVID-19 and how it can spread within healthcare settings – both hospitals and aged care facilities. Additional steps that will be taken to help address these challenges are also outlined.   |          | <a href="#">Weblink</a>               |
| R U OK Day   | Mental Health Chair Jo Connaughton offers some advice for practitioners to look after their own health and wellbeing.  |          | <a href="#">Video</a>                 |
| <b>Business resources</b>                            |  |          |                                       |
| Updated HR in Practice restrictions guide            | Updated guide from HR in Practice for VIC stage 4 and stage 3 workplace relations matters for Victorian members.   |          | <a href="#">Guide</a>                 |
| Victorian members - free access to HR Portal         | HR Portal connects people and organisations to expert advice through our online resource database. This resource is usually available to the APA Business Group Members only, however during these uncertain times, HR Portal has been made accessible to APA members who are affected by the stage 3 restrictions in Victoria.<br>APA members can access the portal by visiting the <a href="#">APA Tools webpage section</a> and selecting HR Portal within the <i>Business group resources</i> section of the page. |          | <a href="#">More information</a>      |
| HR case study  | HR In Practice case study. The piece outlines primary facts of the case, highlights the implications of the proceedings for members' practices and underlines important considerations for members to mitigate their risk – is accompanied by a micro-learning session scheduled for release soon.   |          | <a href="#">Details</a>               |
| JobKeeper  | HR In Practice has provided a new resource on JobKeeper amendments to the Fair Work Act which allow eligible employers participating in the scheme to issue their employees with "JobKeeper enabling directions", which allow businesses greater flexibility to manage their staffing arrangements during these uncertain and challenging times.   |          | <a href="#">HR in Practice Portal</a> |
| Coronavirus guide                                    | The HR In Practice Coronavirus Guides for members has been updated.  | 12/05/20 | <a href="#">Updated guide</a>         |
| Business continuity                                  | Updated business content as below from William Buck on Business continuity on COVID-19 page.   |          | <a href="#">Resources</a>             |
| Student Clinical Placements – Updates guidance - VIC | The DHHS advised updates to the Student Clinical Placements guidance. The main changes to the 14 August guidance are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarification that the guidance applied to both public and private facilities</li> <li>• revision of some environmental requirements aligned to COVID ED's.</li> </ul>  | 15/05/20 | <a href="#">Details</a>               |
| <b>Other resources</b>                               |  |          |                                       |
| AHPA Telehealth Guidelines                           | AHPA has published a useful and succinct guide to telehealth service delivery for allied health practitioners.   |          | <a href="#">Guidelines</a>            |

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| APA Hydrotherapy Guidelines           | The Aquatic Physiotherapy Committee and several other prominent Aquatic physiotherapists have developed the following document for the provision of hydrotherapy during this time. |  | <u>Guidelines</u>            |
| APA Telehealth Guidelines             | The APA Telehealth Guidelines is a comprehensive document that clearly outlines how telehealth should be conducted by practitioners.   |  | <u>Telehealth Guidelines</u> |
| JoP clinical practice recommendations | Physiotherapy management for COVID-19 in the acute hospital setting.   |  | <u>Resource</u>              |