Clinician alert #39 – all clinicians
Effective from 23 December 2020

SARS-CoV-2 testing
ALL PEOPLE WHO MEET THE TESTING CRITERIA SHOULD BE TESTED BY PCR

The downward trend of SARS-CoV-2 testing rates in Western Australia (WA) is a cause for concern. The current situation in New South Wales (NSW) is highlighting the importance of robust surveillance testing of all individuals who meet the testing criteria for SARS-CoV-2. Patients with influenza like illnesses should be tested for respiratory viruses including COVID-19.

If your patient is tested for SARS-CoV-2, please ensure you inform them to stay at home and isolate until they receive their test result.

Contact and droplet precautions are required for any testing of SARS-CoV-2 (symptomatic or asymptomatic patient). This includes mask, gloves, gown and eye protection.

Restricted locations
As per the *Controlled Border for Western Australia Amendment Directions (No 5)*, New South Wales is now considered a restricted location.

Controlled border for Western Australia
As per the *New South Wales Outbreak Response Directions (No 3)*, from 12:01am on 20 December 2020, certain arrivals into WA who have been in NSW in the 14 days prior to entering WA and arrive in WA after 12:01am on 11 December 2020, are only permitted to enter if they are an approved traveller or are subject to a specified arrangement. Arrivals entering WA from the 18 December 2020 are required to quarantine for 14 days on arrival.

COVID-19 testing for travellers from NSW
Certain travellers who arrived in Western Australia from New South Wales between 12:01am 11 December 2020 and 11:59pm 17 December 2020 **will not be required to isolate after their Day 11 COVID-19 test** provided they are asymptomatic.

As per the *Presentation for Testing Direction (No 12)*, certain travellers who have been in NSW in the 14 days before entering WA and who arrive in WA after 12:01am on 18th December 2020 must present for testing within 48 hours of arrival (or on arrival at Perth airport) and on Day 11 after their arrival into WA. **A person who is tested after they present to a COVID clinic must isolate until the person is informed of their result.**

Close contacts
A traveller who is informed by authorities in another State or Territory that they are a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, must contact 13 COVID (13 268 43) and inform them they are a close contact, and immediately quarantine.

Transport, Freight and Logistics
As per the *Transport, Freight and Logistics Direction (No 2)*, drivers who have been in a restricted location, have been in New Zealand and another Australian State of Territory, or have

knowingly been in direct contact with a person who, in the 14 days prior to the direct contact, had been in a restricted location or a place outside of Australia, **will be required to undertake COVID-19 testing every 7 days.**

Isolation after COVID-19 Testing
Infection control measures for individuals awaiting a test result have changed.

As per the [*Quarantine and Isolation (Undiagnosed) Direction (No 2)*](), individuals in isolation who are awaiting a test result are required to:
- Cover their mouth and nose when they sneeze or cough
- Wash their hands often and thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol rub for at least 20 seconds

Exemptions from isolation in WA
The following people do not need to isolate after testing, provided they do not have symptoms of COVID-19:
- People tested under the Presentation for Testing (Quarantine Centre Workers) Directions (No 2).
- People tested under the Transport, Freight and Logistics Directions (No 2).
- People tested as part of the DETECT borders program.
- Carers of a dependent who has been tested, whilst waiting for the result of the dependent person.
- People who undergo serology testing.
- People who need to provide evidence of a negative COVID test for overseas governments. Testing under this circumstance can occur at private pathology collection centres and should not occur at WA government COVID clinics.

Dr Revle Bangor-Jones
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE – STRATEGY