



Special update – COVID

Thank you for your care of women and their families during this pandemic.

This email provides information on the management of Royal Women's Hospital patients while there are high levels of COVID-19 in the community.

This is a rapidly evolving environment. The Women's is continuing to update its information for patients and their families and we will soon have additional information on our webpages for GPs and Shared Care providers.

For the latest guidance on what COVID-19 means for patients, families and visitors, please direct women to the [COVID-19 Information Hub](#) on our website.

Maternity patients

Providing care to COVID positive and suspected high risk COVID women

If your patient tests positive to COVID-19, or is a close or primary contact of a COVID positive person, the Women's will continue to provide care and treatment.

If your patient requires urgent review (e.g. reduced fetal movements, suspected ectopic pregnancy, high blood pressure in pregnancy) care must not be delayed. Please ask your patient to call the Women's ahead of time on 8345 2000 making sure to tell us that she is COVID positive or has been exposed to someone who is. The hospital can then ensure health and safety plans are in place before her arrival.

If your patient does not require urgent review and it is clinically appropriate to do so, the Women's will organise a telehealth appointment.

Special care for COVID positive pregnant women who are patients of the Women's

Pregnant patients, and women in the immediate postnatal period, are considered at higher risk of complications from COVID compared with women who are not pregnant.

Symptomatic COVID positive pregnant patients of the Women's who require respiratory care, as opposed to maternity and obstetric care only, are jointly managed by the Women's and Royal Melbourne Hospital with regular contact, support and monitoring as required.

COVID positive pregnant patients of the Women's who require obstetric care but are otherwise well, will be isolated at our hospital and cared for at the Women's by maternity staff who have additional COVID training.

Important – please note

If an antenatal or postnatal patient of the Women's under your care becomes infected with COVID, and you believe the hospital is unaware of her COVID status, please [email the Women's COVID Coordinator](#). The Women's will contact your patient for a telephone review and to discuss her ongoing care.

Please do not use this email for patients who are not COVID positive, or who are not patients of the Women's.

Recommendations for primary close contacts of a COVID positive person / Tier 1

These patients must follow the [advice provided by the Department of Health](#).

If they are scheduled for routine care at the Women's they should contact the relevant hospital clinic to see if the appointment should be rescheduled or converted to telehealth.

Urgent treatment should not be delayed. Please call or ask the patient to call the Women's on 8345 2000, making sure to tell us that she has been exposed to someone who is COVID positive. The hospital can then ensure health and safety plans are in place before her arrival.

Vaccination is critical for pregnant and breastfeeding women and women planning to get pregnant

The Pfizer and Moderna COVID vaccines are strongly recommended for women at any stage of pregnancy, and are safe for both the woman and baby, and women who are breastfeeding or planning pregnancy.

Patients coming to their antenatal appointments at the Women's should be encouraged to speak to our staff about any questions they may have and the best way to access a vaccination.

Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) screening

Glucose Tolerance Testing (GTT) is the gold standard for diagnosing Gestational Diabetes (GDM) and is the preferred option when it is safe to perform the test. The Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society (ADIPS) has released [advice for GDM screening during the COVID pandemic](#), including recommendations for early testing in women who are at high risk of GDM.

Women's health clinic patients

All new patients for Women's health clinics will be seen via video telehealth for their first appointment, with a face-to-face visit scheduled, if required, in the following weeks.

If a patient is COVID positive at the time of their face-to-face visit, their visit will be rescheduled until they are no longer infective if treatment can be delayed. If they need to be seen while infectious, provisions will be made to do this in a safe setting at the hospital.

Please ask the patient to call ahead to the hospital (8345 2000) so that plans can be made for their arrival.

Tier 1 / primary close contacts

All patients who are Tier 1 / primary close contacts of a COVID positive person are recommended to follow the [advice provided by the Department of Health](#).

If they are scheduled for routine care at the Women's they should contact the relevant hospital clinic to see if the appointment should be rescheduled or converted to telehealth.

Urgent treatment should not be delayed. Please call or ask the patient to call the Women's on 8345 2000, making sure to tell us that she has been exposed to someone who is COVID positive. The hospital can then ensure health and safety plans are in place before her arrival.

Useful resources

The Women's vaccine information webpage

for patients, particularly those who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy.

COVID-19 vaccination shared decision making guide

for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy.

RANZCOG COVID-19 Information Hub

communicating the most up-to-date information to its members.

North Western Melbourne PHN COVID-19 care pathways

for assessment and management of COVID-19 patients.

Contact us

GP Liaison Unit

P: (03) 8345 2064 / 8345 3070

E: gp.liaison@thewomens.org.au

Fast Fax Referral

F: (03) 8345 3036

GP Quick Access Number

P: (03) 8345 2058

Shared Maternity Care Coordinator

P:(03) 8345 2129

E: shared.care@thewomens.org.au

The Women's Switchboard

P: (03) 8345 2000

The Women's Abortion & Contraception Service

P: [\(03\) 8345 3061](tel:(03)83453061) (professional line only – not for use by women needing the service)



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The Royal Women's Hospital acknowledges and pays respect to the peoples of the Kulin Nations, the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which our sites at Parkville and Sandringham stand.

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