

State Control Centre Activated To Oversee COVID-19 Response

11th Mar 2020

The State Control Centre (SCC) has been activated to oversee and coordinate Victoria's response to the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), as another Victorian tests positive for the virus.

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews today joined Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos, Victoria's Chief Health Officer Professor Brett Sutton and Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp to announce the State Control Centre has increased its readiness in recognition that a more coordinated approach is needed to fight this virus.

The likely COVID-19 pandemic will have significant impacts across our economy and across our state, including schools, businesses, and places of mass gatherings, such as sporting and cultural events.

Making the SCC the focal point to our response will help agencies better collaborate and ensure key intelligence, mapping, planning, logistics and public information resources are available as and when they are needed.

EMV will work closely with health authorities, other government agencies, businesses and the wider community to prepare for and respond to the likely pandemic.

Seven screening clinics are now open across the city at Royal Melbourne Hospital, Alfred Hospital, Austin Hospital, Box Hill Hospital, Monash Clayton, Northern Hospital and Sunshine Hospital.

This builds on the launch of the *COVID-19 Pandemic Plan for the Victorian Health Sector* which outlines actions we are taking to slow the spread of the virus in the community, manage demand on hospital resources, respond to a severe outbreak and recover as quickly as possible.

These measures may be disruptive and wide-ranging, including dedicated coronavirus wards in hospitals, increasing telehealth medical consultations, cancelling large public gatherings or closing schools and universities.

There are currently 21 confirmed cases of Coronavirus in Victoria, eight of which are recovered, one in hospital and the rest are recovering in isolation at home.

If you are concerned, call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398. For more information, visit dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Coronavirus will impact the entire Victorian community from business and schools – and that's why a whole-of-government response is needed as we ramp up our response to this emerging pandemic."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"The public health of Victorians is our absolute priority. We are leading the way by partnering with EMV to support and work with all sectors in the community to reduce the risk."

Quote attributable to Victoria's Chief Health Officer Professor Brett Sutton

"Our health services are the front line in the fight against this virus – but it will have wider ranging impact on the whole community, so we are working closely with Emergency Management Victoria on a coordinated response."

Quote attributable to Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp

"We have strong emergency management arrangements in Victoria and this coordination is well-established and practiced for all emergencies, not just bushfires and storms."