

# How to manage a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a young person



Efforts should be made to manage the young person's illness outside of a hospital where advised by medical staff. Most people with COVID-19 can be managed without medical intervention, as long as they are supported with all of their immediate needs and can self-isolate in accordance with health guidance and public health orders.

Where a young person has a confirmed case of COVID-19, and has been advised to self-isolate in the home, staff should consider conducting the following additional activities (whilst continuing to follow risk and issue mitigation activities for suspected cases).

Action	Detailed Mitigation Strategies
Inform Relevant Parties	<p>Providers should contact the Central Access Unit (CAU) and your DCJ contract manager to inform them of a confirmed case of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform your DCJ contract manager as to where the young person is self-isolating as they are required to report on this</li> <li>• Inform the young person's next of kin</li> </ul>
Develop Contingency Plans for Isolation	<p>Maintain the young person in the residential setting they may have moved into when they became a suspected case (see 'Determine Appropriate Scenario Based on Accommodation Suitability' below).</p> <p><i>Note: If a young person is in isolation, they must have 24/7 care. This should be accounted for in plans.</i></p>
Ensure Adequate Accommodation (Accommodation Criteria)	<p>Adequate accommodation for self-isolation is defined as the young person having:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own bedroom</li> <li>• Dedicated bathroom/appropriate staggered access</li> <li>• Capacity to maintain physical distance while exiting and entering the bedroom</li> <li>• Adequate light</li> <li>• Adequate ventilation</li> <li>• Appropriate access to electrical outlets and mobile reception</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Young people in self-isolation are not permitted to access any common areas for the duration of isolation. Staff will need to monitor and supervise common areas to ensure this is being complied with.</i></p>
Determine Appropriate Scenario Based on Accommodation Suitability	<p>A number of self-isolation scenarios have been determined and are explored below in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenario 1 (Preferred Option):</b> Where a young person's current home meets the accommodation criteria above, the young person should self-isolate in their primary place of residence (i.e. no movement)</li> <li>• Where providers cannot meet the accommodation criteria above, there are a number of options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenario 2:</b> Move young person to an 'alternative activity space' i.e. to another house in the organisation with an available bedroom and toilet combination (i.e. appropriate set-up for self-isolation)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Action	Detailed Mitigation Strategies
<p>Determine Appropriate Scenario Based on Accommodation Suitability</p> <p>cont...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenario 3:</b> Contact the CAU to identify an appropriate alternative in another organisation within the region or the broader sector</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 4:</b> Move young person to temporary accommodation i.e. a hotel/motel room</li> </ul> <p>Accommodation provider must be advised that the person coming is positive.</p> <p>Young people may be ‘cohorted’ together in a home setting where they have all been infected and the symptoms are minor (provided it meets the advice of the medical practitioner and the PHU dealing with the case).</p> <p><i>Note: Associated staffing options are explored in section 5.2.2 of the Guidelines: Residential Care Settings for Young People in Out of Home Care (OOHC) and COVID-19.</i></p>
<p>Minimise Staff Rotations and Segregate Care</p>	<p>Where there is a confirmed case, it is desirable to minimise the number of staff providing care to that young person.</p> <p><b>Minimise Rotations:</b> Hours of work could be extended to minimise the number of rotations required in line with the COVID-19 Individual Flexibility Agreements and related guidelines developed by ACWA/ASU in relation to regarding staff who have entered into these Agreements—see section 2.3 of the <i>Guidelines: Residential Care Settings for Young People in Out of Home Care (OOHC) and COVID-19.</i></p> <p><b>Segregate Care:</b> One staff member should be allocated to care for the confirmed case on each shift. (Any other young people in the residential setting who do not meet testing criteria or are COVID-19 negative should be cared for by a different group of staff in the same home).</p>
<p>Stagger Bathroom Access</p>	<p>Designate one bathroom in the house to a young person with a confirmed case.</p> <p>If this is not possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a shared rota to stagger bathroom use</li> <li>• Ensure that the infected person uses the bathroom last to avoid spreading the virus to others</li> <li>• Implement appropriate protocol to ensure the bathroom is cleaned after use by a young person with a confirmed case</li> </ul> <p>Portable toilets could also be used as a temporary solution for infected young person(s).</p>
<p>Reduce Cleaning Frequency of these rooms to ‘As Needed’</p>	<p>In the young person’s self-isolation accommodation setting, consider reducing cleaning frequency to as-needed (e.g. soiled items and surfaces) to avoid unnecessary contact.</p> <p>The cleaning of high touch surfaces in any shared space with a COVID-19 case should be frequent and with appropriate PPE.</p> <p>Where appropriate, provide the young person with personal cleaning supplies for their bedroom including tissues, paper towels, cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants.</p> <p>In the case of an exit clean, staff should wait as long as practical after a COVID-19 positive young person leaves a room to clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, as the virus remains on hard surfaces for up to 12 hours, and the sooner a staff member cleans the surface the greater the chance they have of contracting COVID-19.</p> <p>Please contact your DCJ contract manager if you require an environmental clean in the event of a confirmed case.</p>

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Implement Safe Hygiene Practices	<p>Encourage the young person to cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue (or into their elbow if a tissue is unavailable) and have rubbish bins available to dispose of tissues immediately.</p> <p>Encourage young people to wash their hands regularly, with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (Appendix 3: Handwashing Technique), especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• upon entering and leaving the premises</li> <li>• after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing</li> <li>• after using the bathroom</li> <li>• before eating</li> <li>• before and after the use of eating utensils e.g. cutlery, dishes, glasses</li> </ul> <p>All tableware to go through the dishwasher if available</p> <p>Use of disposable tableware might also be considered</p> <p><i>Note: for a young person with a confirmed case of COVID-19, general hygiene practices still apply and are the same as everyone else in the house.</i></p>
Provide Supplies Required	<p>Offer tissues, a plastic bag to dispose of tissues, soap and where appropriate hand sanitiser to keep near the young person to help limit their movement in the house.</p> <p>Provide the young person with washable bedding.</p> <p>When delivering essential supplies to a young person in self-isolation, staff members should employ the following protocols to ensure no contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave items in a paper (disposable) bag at the front door of the bedroom/accommodation</li> <li>• Ensure a safe 1.5m distance between the courier and the door before it is opened</li> <li>• Ask that the bag carrying the items is not reused</li> </ul>
Ensure Access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<p>All care should be taken to limit face-to-face contact with young people with confirmed COVID-19. Staff should wear the following PPE if they have direct face-to-face interaction with an ill person, bring supplies, provide food or handle young person's belongings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face mask (droplet precautions)</li> <li>• Eye protection (goggles or face shield)</li> <li>• Gown/Apron (contact precautions)</li> <li>• Gloves (standard precautions)</li> </ul> <p>Wash hands immediately with soap and water after removing mask, gloves and gown.</p> <p>Provide disposable face masks for young people and staff.</p>
Encourage Steps towards Recovery	<p>Encourage the young person to lie down and rest or sleep.</p> <p>Encourage drinking fluids regularly to prevent dehydration—water, clear soup, decaffeinated tea, or juice.</p> <p>Provide nutritious food.</p> <p>Paracetamol could be provided to help lower a fever (provided there is no known allergy).</p>

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Monitor Young Person Frequently	<p>Young people with mild symptoms could get worse so continue to monitor them.</p> <p>Check in on young person every few hours—using a non-contact method, where possible—to determine if their health status is getting worse. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call the young person by mobile/room-based telephone</li> <li>• Check in through the window</li> <li>• Speak through the door</li> </ul> <p>For young people who have a high risk of complications from COVID-19 (e.g. those with underlying health conditions) establish a staff schedule to check in on them more regularly. Staff should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record food/fluid intake</li> </ul> <p>Ensure staff know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and at what point symptoms go from mild to severe (section 2.2)—shortness of breath should trigger concern.</p> <p>Use any augmentative communication systems or current processes to provide messaging around symptoms to young people. This could be enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placing posters around the facility (in bedrooms, common rooms, staff rooms, the back of the bathroom door) illustrating the symptoms</li> <li>• Icons could be used to allow young people (including those with low literacy levels/CALD young people) to understand and communicate effectively any of the symptoms</li> </ul> <p>If the young person's symptoms don't alleviate after a week, contact your local healthcare provider.</p> <p>If the young person develops severe symptoms, call emergency response units e.g. the ambulance—advise that young person is confirmed case.</p> <p>Young people with active substance use, mental health problems, or who may be aggressive or non-cooperative, will need a higher level of care.</p>

More information can be found in the *Guidelines: Residential Care Settings for Young People in Out of Home Care (OOHC) and COVID-19*. E.g. Section 2.2 Key public health information for COVID-19, Section 6.1 Infection Control Measures and Section 6.2 Appropriate use of personal protective equipment.

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