

COVID-19 AWARENESS, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Policy & Procedure Control	
Policy & Procedure Name	COVID-19 AWARENESS, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
Policy & Procedure Status	FINAL
Version No.	3
Date Approved	19th January 2022
Date of Next Review	
Approval Authority	Cancer Care Western NSW Executive and Board

1. Purpose

This policy aims is to

- a) ensure that the health of guests, carers and staff at Western Care Lodge is protected,
- b) facilitate guests ongoing access to treatment at the Central West Cancer Centre, and
- c) allow for the ongoing operation of the Lodge in providing accommodation for guests being treated for cancer,

through procedures to minimise the likelihood of Covid-19 entering and of spreading in the Lodge.

2. Scope

All staff, contractors, volunteers, guests, carers and visitors are required to comply with the specified procedures which are being introduced because of the wide and rapid spread of Covid-19 in Western NSW in early 2022.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 CCW – Cancer Care Western NSW
- 3.2 The Lodge – Western Care Lodge
- 3.3 Covid-19 Vaccine – A vaccine approved by the Australian government.
- 3.4 Covid-19 Test – a PCR test on swabs taken at an official testing centre.
- 3.5 PPE - Personal protective equipment designed to protect people from Covid-19 infection.
- 3.6 PHU – Public Health Unit, NSW Health, Bathurst.

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4. Statement of Principles

CCW is committed to adhering to all legislation, regulations and best practices.

CCW is committed to complying with the directions of the Public Health Unit and Western NSW Local Health District in the event of Covid-19 being suspected or occurring in anyone at the Lodge.

CCW is committed to cooperating with Central West Cancer Care Centre to facilitate access to treatment for guests at the Lodge as appropriate.

5. Policy for Covid-19

Covid-19 has been spreading in the Central Western NSW since July 2021 however the incidence and distribution of infection has increased rapidly in December 2021 as government restrictions eased and the more highly infectious Omicron variant spread.

Both Delta and Omicron variants present a genuine health threat to guests, carers and staff at the Lodge and especially to people who are immunocompromised or not booster vaccinated.

Staff, contractors, guests and carers must observe NSW Public Health Orders.

Vaccination

All staff are required to have their booster vaccination as early as possible.

All contractors, guests and carers are strongly encouraged to have their booster vaccination as early as possible.

Symptoms and Contacts

Any people who have symptoms of Covid-19, or are classified as Close Contacts for Covid-19 or who have had significant other contact with people infected, or suspected to be infected, with Covid-19 are not to enter the Lodge until their status is resolved (by isolation and negative testing as required by NSW Health).

Testing

Before coming to the Lodge, all guests and carers will have

- a) completed a standard Covid-19 risk assessment, AND,
- b) received a negative Covid-19 PCR test in the previous 72 hours.

Where a guest or carer has not received a PCR test result on arrival, they will be required to be tested by a sensitive Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). RATs will be conducted by a health professional where possible. If this is not possible, the

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guest and carer will self-administer the test in the presence of a staff member to help ensure that the sampling and testing is conducted correctly.

If the PCR or RAT results for either person is positive, the guest and carer must not enter the Lodge.

If both the guest's and carer's results are negative, they may be accepted on the condition that they remain isolated pending a negative PCR result.

Movements outside the Lodge

As Covid-19 is now widespread in the region, guests and carers are strongly encouraged to stay at the Lodge for the duration of their treatment and return home at the end of their treatment.

If guests and carers return home they should remain isolated from potential sources of Covid infection.

Guests and Carers returning to the Lodge must comply with all the conditions above, except that a negative RAT will be required instead of a negative PCR.

Visitors, non-essential contractors and short-term accommodation

Due to the current widespread occurrence of Covid-19 and difficulties obtaining timely test results, visitors, non-essential contractors and hospital patients seeking short-term accommodation (eg for angiograms) will not be accepted at the Lodge until further notice.

Registration

People entering the Lodge will sign-in using the QR Code (or manually if they have no phone).

The Manager will also maintain a manual register of guests and carers including their local government/council area (LGA).

PPE and cleaning

The Manager will maintain adequate supplies of PPE, cleaning materials, hand sanitiser, and other consumables recommended to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 at the Lodge.

The Manager will ensure staff and cleaners are trained in the correct use of PPE and maintain appropriate resources and services to correctly dispose of potentially contaminated PPE and other materials.

The Manager will engage qualified cleaners to undertake a Covid deep-clean if required.

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6. Procedure for Preparedness

- 6.1** The Manager will maintain records of the Covid-19 vaccinations of all staff and contractors, including boosters.
- 6.2** Guests and carers will present a completed risk assessment form (Attachment 1) with documentary evidence of vaccination and testing on arrival at the Lodge. Staff will review and witness the signing of the form.
- 6.3** The Manager will maintain summary records of Covid-19 vaccination of all guests and carers.
- 6.4** An unvaccinated guest or carer will only be accepted at the Lodge if he/she advises at the time of booking and provides written evidence from their oncologist (or, for a carer, his/her personal doctor) that it is medically unwise or contraindicated for him/her to have the vaccine.
- 6.5** Where it is feasible, a guest/carer who is unvaccinated for medical reasons may be allocated a room that reduces contact with other guests and shared airspaces such, as corridors and living areas.
- 6.6** To reduce the potential exposure of staff Covid-19, the Manager will make appropriate arrangements with staff so that only one staff member is present the Lodge in any day. Arrangements may include working from home, staggered hours, etc.

7. Procedures for Response to Covid-19 Contacts

- 7.1** If anyone at the Lodge is advised that they are a Close Contact or have had other significant contact with Covid-19, he or she must advise the Manager immediately.
- 7.2** The person (and any accompanying guest or carer) must be tested by both RAT and PCR as soon as possible at the closest testing centre and otherwise remain isolated and be tested further as directed by the PHU.
- 7.3** The Manager will assist guests and carers who are in isolation procure food and other necessities.

8. Procedures for Response to Suspected or Confirmed Covid-19 Infection

- 8.1** If anyone develops symptoms of Covid-19 at the Lodge, the Manager will immediately lock-down the Lodge, advise the PHU and the Central West Cancer Care Centre of the circumstances and symptoms.

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8.2 The Manager will also advise any other people who may have been exposed to infection at the Lodge during the previous 14 days.

8.3 The Manager will arrange for the person to be tested at the closest testing centre as soon as possible or as directed by the PHU.

8.4 The Manager may reorganise accommodation and movements within the Lodge to minimize the contact with others, including only using external doors to verandahs.

8.5 If a person at the Lodge exhibits symptoms of deteriorating health, such as breathing difficulties and dizziness, an ambulance will be called.

8.6 If Covid-19 is confirmed in a person at the Lodge, the Manager will take immediate steps to lock-down the premises and isolate ALL people in the Lodge, notify the PHU and follow directions.

8.7 If Covid-19 is confirmed, the PHU may direct the response which may include moving infected people to Supported Health Accommodation, closing the Lodge and having it deep-cleaned before operations could resume.

8.8 If a staff member contracts Covid at the Lodge, Safework NSW will be advised (Phone 13 10 50).

8.9 If the Manager is advised that someone has been diagnosed with Covid-19 within 14 days of leaving the Lodge, she will advise other people who may have been exposed at the Lodge.

9. Resource People

CCW Spokespersons:

Mr John Carpenter, 0418 639 742 / jcc@blackwellshort.com.au

Dr Jamie Gordon, 0428 814 836 / j.gordon48@optusnet.com.au

PHU Bathurst - Sue Turcato: (02) 6330 5944 or (02) 6330 5880.

susan.turcato@health.nsw.gov.au After Hours 0428 400 526.

Central West Cancer Care Centre - Fran Ferguson, Rural Cancer Nurse

Coordinator: (02) 6369 3967, 0429 397 931

frances.ferguson@health.nsw.gov.au

Orange Health Service - Dr Jake Williams, Infectious Diseases Physician:

(02) 6365 7828 / jacowilliams@csu.edu.au

McArdles Cleaning, Orange – Mark Mangune (02) 6361 8447/

mark@mcardles.com.au

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10. Revision History

Vs 2 - 11 October 2021

Vs 3 – ## January 2022

11. Related Policies, Procedures and Other Documents

Attachment 1 - Covid Risk Assessment for Guests and Carers from High-risk Areas for Covid 19, Version 3.1, then as subsequently updated.

NSW Health:

Information for people exposed to COVID-19

health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/people-exposed-to-covid.aspx

NSW Health COVID-19 self-isolation guideline

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/self-isolation-covid-and-close.aspx>

Rapid antigen testing information for businesses

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/business/rapid-antigen-testing-information-for-businesses>

Self-isolation and testing

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/self-isolation-and-testing.aspx>

12. Acknowledgements

Date Approved	19 th January 2022
Approval Authority	Executive: Chairman
Signature	