

Mid/Far North Office

19 Homestead Road, Kerikeri 0230
Phone: (09) 401 6657
Out of Area: 0800 729 787
Email: hsnwageskk@homesupport.co.nz



**Home Support
North**
Charitable Trust

Whangarei Office

7A First Avenue, Whangarei 0110
Phone: (09) 430 2090
Out of Area: 0800 832 383
Email: officewhg@homesupport.co.nz

For regular updates please go to our website "NEWS" page - www.homesupport.co.nz/page/news.html

COVID-19 – Lockdown update @ Wednesday 8th April 2020

Safety reminder from the Northern Regional HCSS Clinical Managers meeting, regarding Support Workers making home visits.

In a weekly teleconference attended by our Operations Manager Debra Peters yesterday, Sharon Mildon (Quality Nurse Leader, Auckland and Waitemata DHBs) reminded Providers that Support Workers need to ensure they are ***asking at the door before entering – is the Client well?*** if not, please phone the office for further instructions.

1. Essential Services

We continue to provide essential services. Thank you to all our Clients for being understanding in these difficult times. To our Staff, thank you all so much for caring and being willing to do whatever is required. With the ceasing of non-essential services, daily visits have dropped by more than 100. But we are still providing more than 600 essential visits a day, with 100 fewer Support Workers working.

Essential Services – which we will keep providing wherever possible:

- Personal Care (including showering supervision and medication supervision)
- Most Meal Preparation
- Some essential Shopping

Non-essential services – not prioritised during the lockdown:

- Household Management (Home Care) will not be prioritised and may not be provided
- Supervision (attendant care of a Client, where the spouse/partner is relieved from being the sole carer and can have a rest, go shopping, go out, etc) will most likely not be provided during the lockdown
- Most Shopping will not be provided during the lockdown. Alternative arrangements have been made or discussed with Clients or family.

To our Support Workers - Call us if you are unsure whether to go to work or not.

To our Clients - Call us if you are unsure about your service.

2. Staff Wages

We have committed to maintain the pay of our Support Workers at expected/normal levels for the duration of the Government's current four-week Covid-19 lockdown.

For Support Workers to receive your usual pay, you need to be available to carry out work as requested by the office. Some Support Workers may be requested to assist with other related work.

Sam has updated the schedule of types of “COVID-19” leave and how we are proposing to pay them in the Support Worker section of the Website. We intend to pay as normal on Thursday the 9th, and will check and fix any errors in the following week. Any Special Leave paid will not affect your sick leave and annual leave entitlements.

For any urgent questions about your pay (like for instance you didn’t get paid), Sharon and Karen will be in the pay office in Kerikeri from 8am to 10am on Good Friday and be happy to try and resolve it with you. Although I don’t think the banking system will be operating again until the Tuesday after Easter, so very unlikely we can fix anything and pay you until then.

We will endeavour to be as fair and reasonable as possible with our expectations, and we are relying on you to be the same in return.

3. ACC funding

No update on this – still as per Friday 3rd April.

4. Preserving and sustaining the workforce

To all our Staff, please, everyone, be assured that your employment will continue and we will do our best to support you through this unsettled period. You are a vital part of the health system and your work is crucial. The community will once again rely on you to resume normal duties once this lockdown and isolation period is over.

5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We received our first supply of PPE from the NDHB on Friday 3rd April. Nothing further as yet - so if you have already collected your mask allocation and hand sanitiser, that’s it for now – sorry.

Supplies are only for Support Workers that are currently working.

Remember to bring a wee container for us to decant some hand sanitiser into for you (we only have 500ml bottles). Please bring your own bag for carrying supplies. We intend to continue with these same time/place routines each week. (Including the Kerikeri and Whangarei offices.)

Kaitaia – Thursday’s, with our trainer Fiona Barrett 027 407 9381 at the Chaplin’s office (located at the rear of the Kaitaia Hospital) from 12.30pm to 2.30pm for PPE and forms.

Russell Medical Centre – Tuesday’s between 11am – 12noon for supply of masks and hand sanitiser.

Any weekday between 10am – 4pm for other PPE needed

Kaikohe - Broadway Health (including Ohaeawai & Okaihau) – Tuesday’s between 11am – 12noon for supply of masks and hand sanitiser. Look for the Blue Mitsubishi Lancer by the covered walkway.

Paihia – text Pamela 027 615 3757 for your supplies – she will provide you with collection details

Doubtless Bay/Coopers Beach area - text Lynn 027 441 0968 for your supplies – she will provide you with collection details

Reminder – PPE is in high demand and short supply. These are allocated to those currently working. Please apply the ration of use guidelines. i.e Only used for Close contact cares

6. Communication

No change from Friday 3rd April.

7. Gloves and forms, and timesheets as usual

No change from Friday 3rd April.

Please continue to drop your timesheets off in the post box at the People Centre and we'll collect them as usual at 12noon after the next pay period end, on Monday the 20th of April.

8. SW Identification badges

No change from Friday 3rd April.

9. Flu vaccinations

To our Support Workers - remember, you have priority to receive an early flu vaccination because you are an aged/disability care worker. You should be vaccinated early (from 18 March) to enable you to keep working over winter and stop you getting sick and adding to the demand that Covid-19 will place on our health system. On the 20th of March we sent all Support Workers the recommendation to get the vaccination and advised of the form to be completed to claim your reimbursement (up to \$45). I'll make sure Sam has this form up on the Support Worker section of our website. We strongly encourage you to get this shot asap.

10. Child Care & Supervision for Essential Workers

To our Support Workers - the Government wants to ensure essential workers can access care and supervision for their children. We've got the communication from Adri Isbister, Deputy Director-General Disability MoH dated 8th April about this, up on the Support Worker section of our website, which includes the contact details if you have been unable to access this care – ECE.Info@education.govt.nz. The Ministry of Education will then make arrangements for a home-based provider (there are now 15) to contact you.

11. Keeping yourself safe

Debra has loaded a section onto our website about best practice at this time – have a look here:-

[**Our Welfare/Behaviour**](#)

12. To our Clients who are vulnerable (over 70, underlying medical conditions, compromised immunity) - you need to take more precautions to protect yourself against all infections, including COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people with cold or flu-like illnesses.

- Cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing.
- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with water and soap and dry them thoroughly:
 - before eating or handling food
 - after using the toilet
 - after coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose or wiping children's noses
 - after caring for sick people.

On top of the normal self-isolation that we are all practicing (staying within our bubbles at home, etc) - additional measures that you and your whānau and friends can take include:

- Stay at home, and ask others to pick up supplies for you. You just need to ask them to leave these at the door, rather than come in. Drop-offs at the door, rather than coming in, will protect vulnerable people from exposure to COVID-19.
- Stay at least 2 metres away from people who are unwell.
- If you're unwell, avoid contact with someone who is immune-compromised.
- If your health care provider advises you to wear a mask when in public areas because you have a particularly vulnerable immune system, follow that advice.
- If you are taking immunosuppressive drugs we advise that you do not stop this medication without first consulting your GP or specialist.

Also checkout the following links for regular updates:

[MOH COVID-19 Info - \(www.health.govt.nz\)](http://www.health.govt.nz)

[Government Website - All info related to COVID-19 – \(www.covid19.govt.nz\)](http://www.covid19.govt.nz)

[Home Support North Website COVID-19 Page \(www.homesupport.co.nz/page/covid-19\)](http://www.homesupport.co.nz/page/covid-19)

Stay safe and keep in touch.

The Management Team

Home Support North Charitable Trust