

Mid/Far North Office

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**Home Support
North**
Charitable Trust

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

COVID-19 – Lockdown update @ Thursday 9th April 2020

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

Sharon Mildon (Quality Nurse Leader, Auckland and Waitemata DHBs)
reminds Support Workers to

ask 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.

We have 326 Clients whose support is suspended during the Lockdown.

And there are 109 Support Workers not working (for various reasons).

Still more than six hundred visits a day happening though. Amazing effort by all staff to keep this Service running, thank you all.

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.

See the Support Worker section of our website for the current schedule of types of "COVID-19" leave and how we propose to pay them for the fortnight ended 5th April. In breaking news, we received advice this morning from our association to register and claim the 'Essential Workers Leave Support' for those who cannot work because they are over 70 or are immunocompromised. If we are

successful then anyone who falls into this 'Essential Workers Leave Support' category (23 SWs) and we've asked you to take sick leave or annual leave or alternative days, we will correct that next pay.

We intend to pay as normal today, 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 tomorrow (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.

Claiming unworked Covid-19-related hours on the "COVID-19 WAGE SUBSIDY CLAIM FORM"

Sharon has noted from the pay today that there are some things you can do to make sure you get paid correctly, and to help make this massive job a little more manageable for payroll staff.

- Please don't claim for exited Clients.
- Please don't claim if you have been given replacement work.
- Please only put UNWORKED hours on your claim form.
- Don't put SNC on your claim form – notify the Co-ordinator Support and note on your timesheet.
- MUST put all info including Client ID & hours & reason – 6a or 6b.
- Please write clearly.

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.

Supplies are only for Support Workers that are currently working.

Remember to bring a small container for us to decant a 50ml supply of 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 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 with our Co-ordinator Julie 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 – sorry – Pamela is off on leave now for a week – please phone the office if you need supplies next week and we will have to work out some way to get them to you

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.

URGENT UPDATE

We've just been and collected a supply of masks and hand sanitiser from the Whangarei Hospital, so if anyone urgently needs them in Whangarei, before Tuesday the 14th when the offices open again, please text Debra on 027 776 8109. At this stage Debra is planning on being in the Whangarei office for distribution on Saturday 11 April, **10am to noon** for urgent supply distribution.

Anyone who urgently needs more supplies in the Kerikeri area – we hope to have Fiona in the office on Saturday 11 April, 10am to noon, as well – text her on 021 089 50940. Very limited stock though, until Tuesday.

The offices will be open again as usual on Tuesday – call first to make sure we have the supplies then come on in to get them. We are hoping we will be fine for PPE from now on. Finally. Whew.

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 (on our website) to be completed to claim your reimbursement (up to \$45). 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 put 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