

Tuesday, 31 August 2021

ISLHD to provide local COVID Accommodation services

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) will continue to increase its capacity to care for potential and confirmed COVID cases, with work underway to establish local accommodation sites as part of our COVID-19 response.

ISLHD Chief Executive Margot Mains, said the District's COVID-19 response plan is reviewed daily and includes significant forward planning to ensure we are prepared to respond to an increase in local community transmission.

"As positive case numbers across the region and the state continue to increase, we are focused on ensuring the District can support our local community to be able to isolate safely and receive care if they are unwell with COVID," Ms Mains said.

"The impact of the Delta variant within households has been significant and many people simply cannot safely isolate at home. Our teams are now working to establish safe, local accommodation for patients who do not need hospital treatment, but who need to be isolated away from other family members or household contacts," she said.

Referred to as *Community Supported Accommodation*, the District is working with a local venue to provide accommodation for people awaiting COVID-19 test results to safely isolate if they're unable to do so at home.

The District is also working to establish a local *Special Health Accommodation* site for COVID positive patients who need some care and support but don't require the higher level care being provided in Wollongong Hospital's COVID Ward.

"We need to be ready to care for more COVID positive patients should there be an increase in local community transmission and we are currently working to establish a dedicated Special Health Accommodation in the vacant portion of the new Bulli Hospital.

"This site has always been part of our considerations in responding to COVID, but it has not been required until now.

"The Special Health Accommodation is in addition to the Wollongong Hospital COVID-Ward, and we assure the community that should you become unwell with COVID – your local hospital is well equipped to care for you," Ms Mains said.

Work on both the Community Supported Accommodation and Special Health Accommodation is ongoing and further details will be advised once finalised.

The NSW public health system is highly integrated and local health districts throughout the state work together on a daily basis to ensure the optimal delivery of healthcare services across the state.

The NSW Government has committed more than \$4 billion to the NSW health system to manage the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

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