



Milton Therapy and Learning Centre
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27 July 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy

*** NSW Health Update 24.07.20**

On Friday 24 July, NSW Health escalated its advice to “Amber Alert”

The escalation to Amber Alert – Moderate Transmission by NSW Health applies to surgical mask use within 1.5 metres in all healthcare facilities and community health services, including hospital in the home, operated by NSW Health. Private and independent health care providers may refer to our advice for guidance and to inform their own local risk assessments.

General principles – apply to all settings and all scenarios

The fundamental principles of infection prevention and control must be applied across all settings at all times.

These principles apply:

- 1) Administrative and engineering controls as per Infection Prevention*
- 2) Physical distancing*
- 3) Standard precautions for all healthcare interactions*
- 4) Hand hygiene*
- 5) Enhanced cleaning of high touch surfaces*
- 6) Ensure relevant staff have completed donning and doffing of PPE*
- 7) Ensure there is on-site, readily available testing for staff*
- 8) Health workers (HWs) to stay at home if they are unwell*
- 9) Entry screening for visitors and staff as per NSW Health guidelines*

Milton and Bay and Basin Therapy and Learning Centres have adopted the advice from NSW Health where applicable within our context. This includes use of surgical masks by therapists where physical distancing cannot be maintained.



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NSW Health Guidelines for health services (including Allied Health Centres)

Under the Public Health Act, a health service includes “optical dispensing, dietitian, massage therapy, naturopathy, acupuncture, speech therapy, audiology and audiometry service”.

The Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order 2020 requires certain premises to close, including spas, nail salons, beauty salons, waxing salons, tanning salons, tattoo parlours or massage parlours. This does not apply to premises offering health services.

People providing health services may include non-registered health practitioners. All non-registered health practitioners must comply with the code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners. The code requires, among other things, that “a health practitioner must adopt standard precautions for the control of infection in his or her practice.”

Health services that continue to operate should implement processes to minimise risk of transmission, including screening clients for symptoms or contact with a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, identifying and excluding unwell staff members, social distancing measures where feasible e.g. waiting rooms, and infection control procedures including access to soap and water or hand sanitising and enhancing environmental cleaning.

To minimise the risks posed by COVID-19 the following procedures have been put in place.

TLC will:

- Provide signposted hand wash stations with sufficient hand wash for regular hand washing
- Provide alcohol based hand sanitiser within all therapy rooms, waiting room and reception
- Provide alcohol based hand sanitiser for home/school and community visits
- Provide disinfectant wipes and spray disinfectant for regular cleaning of therapy tools/toys and workspaces



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- Provide staff with all resources necessary to deliver high quality Telehealth services
- All staff will complete Infection Control Training
- Implement a 4 person limit (including children) in the waiting room with clients given the option to wait in their car and receive a phone call when their therapist is ready
- Implement a 3 person limit in each therapy room and 4 person limit in the sensory gym as per the 4m² per person guidelines (this limit includes the therapist). Families are encouraged not to bring siblings to therapy sessions.
- Implement an exit/entry procedure with all clients entering the premises at the rear of the premises and exiting at the front. Clients with mobility issues will enter and exit the rear of the property
- Clearly signpost standing spots for reception to ensure social distancing of 1.5m
- Ensure resources that are difficult to clean such as playdough/sand etc...are allocated to one client/family only
- Stagger appointment start and finish times where possible and allow for time between appointments to allow for cleaning of rooms, resources and surfaces.

Staff at TLC will:

- Wash their hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, between clients and after going to the toilet (in-centre and community appointments)
- Cover coughs and sneezes, dispose of tissues, and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser regularly
- Wash/wipe down toys and resources between clients
- Disinfect work spaces/surfaces between clients
- Practice social distancing with colleagues
- Practice social distancing with clients where appropriate
- Wear surgical masks where social distancing is not possible
- If unwell, even with mild symptoms, remain at home
- Staff working from home with mild symptoms will deliver therapy via Telehealth or offer alternative services such as resource making or report writing.



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Clients at TLC will:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water, before their sessions, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet (in-centre and community-based appointments)
- Not bring food or beverages into the centre (a personal water bottle is permitted)
- Cover coughs and sneezes, dispose of tissues, and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- If unwell, remain at home as per usual illness requirements. If unsure of whether or not to attend in person, clients are asked to phone the centre to discuss appropriateness of a face to face session. If you are in doubt, please arrange a Telehealth session
- Families will be offered alternative services/support if unwell i.e. Telehealth, resource making, report writing

Testing for COVID-19

NSW Health advises that as the number of COVID-19 cases in NSW decreases, it is important to increase testing to ensure any new cases or outbreaks are identified and managed rapidly. Criteria have recently been expanded to recommend anyone with respiratory symptoms or unexplained fever should be tested for COVID-19.

- Staff exhibiting respiratory symptoms or unexplained fever are required to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to face to face sessions
- Clients exhibiting respiratory symptoms or unexplained fever are strongly encouraged to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to face to face sessions

Who is most at risk of a serious illness?

Some people who are infected may not get sick at all, some will get mild symptoms from which they will recover easily, and others may become very ill, very quickly. **Milton and Bay & Basin TLC provide services to a number of people who are considered at the most risk of serious illness.** From previous experience with other coronaviruses, the people at most risk of serious infection are:

- **people with compromised immune systems** (e.g. cancer)
- **elderly people**
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**
- **people with diagnosed chronic medical conditions**



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- **very young children and babies***
- **people in group residential settings**
- people in detention facilities.

***At this stage the risk to children and babies, and the role children play in the transmission of COVID-19, is not clear. However, there has so far been a low rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children, relative to the broader population.**

How is the virus treated?

There is no specific treatment for coronaviruses. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses. Most of the symptoms can be treated with supportive medical care.

Staying up to date

The clinical director and business manager of Milton and Bay & Basin TLC are committed to staying up to date with developments relating to COVID-19 and their implications for staff and clients. As developments occur TLC will adjust policy and procedures as necessary. Families are encouraged to ask for updates if they have any concerns or questions relating to TLC's response to COVID-19.