

24 March 2020

## **IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO ALL ALLIED HEALTH CLIENTS**

### **AND PRIMARY CONTACTS**

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the safety and wellbeing of Uniting AgeWell clients, our staff and our communities is Uniting AgeWell's primary concern.

We have been closely monitoring the evolving coronavirus situation and implemented a range of precautionary measures based on the advice of Government and the Department of Health.

With the new social distancing measures and restrictions introduced over the past 48 hours, Uniting AgeWell is modifying the delivery of its allied health services, effective from today until at least Sunday, 19 April 2020.

#### **What this means for you**

All AgeWell Centres will be closed for individual and group activities, however, individual allied health assessments and reviews will continue.

We will commence working with you to identify what services we can put in place quickly to assist you to remain independent at home.

Our staff will be making contact with you or your primary contact to develop a care plan that reflects your requirements in the coming weeks.

Examples of things we are planning to undertake include:

- Where possible, visiting you at home to develop a tailored exercise program with you and provide monitoring and advice;
- Providing you with a self-managed home based exercise program;
- Regular telephone-based contact and over time, the use of tele-health technology to connect with you remotely

#### **What if I need other services during this time?**

If you feel you need some assistance with things such as shopping, transportation to appointments or assistance with personal care, Uniting AgeWell may be able to assist you.

On 20 March 2020, the Department of Health advised that if people need urgent or immediate services, these can be put in place for up to six weeks without the need for an assessment for clients affected by COVID19 or in self-isolation.

Please feel free to contact your local Agewell Centre on **9845 3114** and we will provide you with advice and assist you to access the services you need.

#### **What else do I need to know?**

If you are presenting with any of the following symptoms including: sore throat, coughing, fever, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties, please let us know before we visit you at home.

We will enquire about your health, whether you have seen a doctor and work out a plan to assist you. We may ask you to wear a mask that we will provide.

#### **Corporate Services**

☎ 1300 783 435

✉ [info@unitingagewell.org](mailto:info@unitingagewell.org)

📍 130 Little Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000

#### **Uniting AgeWell**

ABN: 19 628 178 816

An organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia

[unitingagewell.org](http://unitingagewell.org)

Our staff will also take extra precautions when visiting you in the home including frequent hand washing, wearing a protective mask and a disposable apron. All staff visiting you at home will be wearing their Uniting AgeWell identification badge.

For the latest information and advice on how to stay safe, reduce the risk and stop the spread of coronavirus, please read the attached information leaflet from the Department of Health or go to [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

**I'm currently paying gym membership fees, will I continue to pay these during this time?**

Any gym membership fees will be suspended for the period that the centre remains closed for gymnasium based fees and group exercise activities.

There are no exit fees for people with Uniting AgeWell gym memberships.

**What are the charges for other services I may access?**

Where we arrange services for you on a 1:1 basis in your home or in the community, the costs of these services will be the same as if you were accessing centred-based activities. There will be no increase.

If you are receiving 1:1 assistance currently, these fees will continue.

Clients will not be disadvantaged if they cannot afford to pay for services. If you cannot afford to pay please let us know.

What else do I need to know?

**Contacting us**

We will continue to review this decision in line with Government and Health Department advice and will keep you informed of any changes.

Please call your local Uniting AgeWell centre on **9845 3114** if you have any queries.

We have also established a special email address for client enquiries about the information in this letter and our services: [AgeWellCentresVic@unitingagewell.org](mailto:AgeWellCentresVic@unitingagewell.org)

Where we receive an email, we aim to respond to you by the next business day.

Please be assured that Uniting AgeWell is doing everything it possibly can to reduce the impact of these changes, continue your services and provide you with the supports you need to maintain your independence and wellbeing, while keeping you and our staff safe during these challenging times.

Thank you for your understanding and again, please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely



**Paul Warwick**  
**Regional Manager**  
**Agewell Centres Victoria**