

During COVID-19, your health system is here for you. Our hospitals, doctors' surgeries and other health services remain available to ensure you get the care you need. Some changes have been made to keep patients, staff and the community safe. Please call your health provider first before visiting them. If it's an emergency, call 111.



## Be kind. Check-in on the elderly or vulnerable.

### Make a difference by:

- checking-in on any elderly or vulnerable people you know
- dropping supplies to those at home sick.

Find out more at  
**Covid19.govt.nz**

New Zealand Government

**Unite  
against  
COVID-19**

## Help is available if things get tough

Everyone in a family or a relationship should feel safe and nurtured. Healthy relationships are supportive, trusting and warm. Being in lockdown with others can challenge even the best relationships and it is a tense time for most of us. There are many people feeling anxious, stressed, worried and scared. Tense situations often causes disagreements and arguments within relationships which is normal, however, we must remember that even when we disagree with each other we can still be kind towards one another.

When arguments and disagreements get too heated take some time out, take a walk, take a break.

If you experience violence in your relationship seek help. You can tell a friend, family member, workmate, teacher, carer, employer, health professionals or police. No one should ever be fearful of their partner or members of their family.

No matter what your age or sex, it is never ok for your partner or any member of your family to use violence to hurt or control you.

If you are experiencing violence there are people who can help or offer advice:

- Women's refuge: 0800 733 843
- National Network of Stopping Violence Service: nnsvs.org.nz
- Shakti: 0800 742 584
- New Zealand Police
- Shine: enquiries@2shine.org.nz
- What's Up: 0800 942 8787
- App to keep women safe: www.1in3befree.org.nz
- www.areyouok.org.nz
- Hey Bro - Supporting men to listen and to help: 0800 439 276
- Elder Abuse Helpline: 0800 32 668 65

## Tips for looking after your wellbeing

The COVID -19 pandemic is stressful so it's important to work out how we are going to look after our own wellbeing, and the wellbeing of our whānau and community as we get through the lockdown together.



### The 5 ways to wellbeing

*Bringing these 5 actions into your daily life can improve your wellbeing.*

### Talk to a trained Counsellor

Things are really tough right now for many of us and stress and anxiety can make things worse. If you need help, you can **call or text 1737** at any time to speak with a trained counsellor – it is free and confidential.

#### 1 Connect – me whakawhanaunga

- Getting involved in online group
- Call family and friends for a catch up

#### 2 Give – tukua

- Give a smile
- Do a random act of kindness
- If you have a fruit trees, donate excess fruit

#### 3 Take Notice - me aro tonu

- Be aware of the world around you
- Be mindful of the food you eat, its taste, texture, smell and colour
- Practice gratitude

#### 4 Keep learning – me oko tanu

- Try something new or rediscover an old interest
- Visit your local library's online site
- For children explore online help with homework. [www.dunedinlibraries.govt.nz/youth/anyquestions](http://www.dunedinlibraries.govt.nz/youth/anyquestions)

#### 5 Be active – me kari tonu

- Use stairs
- Learn to dance
- Participate in an online exercise class.

### What does the move Alert Level 4 to Alert Level 3

As we move from Alert Level 4 to Alert Level 3 there is a lot of work to catch up on. Over the past four weeks the DHB had to postpone over 2500 face to face appointments (some of these we've been able to do virtually), and about 420 planned operations.

We are planning to resume as much care as can be managed safely and this will continue as we move down the Alert levels. This may mean managing appointments in a different way such as via online/telephone/non-contact methods.

We realise how important this care is and we are working to provide this as soon as possible and in order of clinical priority. Please be reassured that you will be contacted as soon as we can if you have an outstanding appointment or surgery.

Please continue to play your part by maintaining physical distancing, washing your hands, coughing into your elbow and seeking advice early from your GP or Healthline if you're sick. If it's an emergency dial 111.

[www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/ways-to-wellbeing](http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/ways-to-wellbeing)



fb.com/southerndhb



instagram.com/southerndhb



youtube.com/southerndhb



shorturl.at/stSU2



# News from Gore Health Ltd

Emergency Management is a priority for Gore Health Ltd and with a raised awareness of COVID -19 since January, we responded early.

Our Health Emergency Plan was activated and communication extended locally and regionally. We expanded our Emergency Department to ten beds, which included a fully staffed four bed ‘Red Zone’ for suspected Coronavirus patients. We also designated four beds in the inpatient ward as ‘Red Zone’. Our staff have come on

the journey with us, providing feedback to make practical improvements on our processes. Clear plans were in place, if there was to be an escalation of numbers.

At all times the priority was, and is still is, on the health and safety of our patients, staff and community. Pandemic supplies were already held onsite, which included a supply of personal protective equipment.

Our Allied Health staff have been working from home completing inpatient referrals, and our District Nurses continue to work in the community and on phone consultations.

A huge thank you to our Gore Health Ltd team and their families for their contribution and commitment during this challenging time.

Finally to the Eastern Southland community who have been our frontline, following the lockdown principles and protecting our health service - Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.



Karl Metzler  
CEO Gore Health



Nurse Practitioners Trudee Sharp and Gina Mills at the entry to the Emergency Department ‘Red Zone’ in personal protective equipment.



We all need to work together if we want to slow the spread of COVID-19. Unite against the virus now.



Washing and drying your hands kills the virus



Cough or sneeze into your elbow



Stay home if you are sick

## Board Update



Dave Cull, Chair

Less than two months ago when I last wrote this column, the mood across the health system was of trying to outrun a tsunami.

The images from across the globe could not have warned us more starkly – we needed to act, and spare no effort to avoid those scenes playing out in our communities, and in our hospitals.

The fact that I can now describe a sense of cautious optimism barely captures the past tumultuous weeks – from our first cases trickling in, to the rapidly escalating case numbers fuelled by international and returning travellers and two significant clusters in our district, to the unprecedented and decisive step to starve the virus of hosts by restricting our activities and breaking the chain of transmission.

We saw some people become very unwell, and we lost lives, and my sympathies go out to all those who have been personally affected by this tragedy.

Yet it could have been so much worse.

We have been lucky, but has not just been about luck.

I do want to make special mention of the public health team who have responded at speed and scale to this emergency. Thanks also to WellSouth and our primary care partners, Southern Community Laboratories for their incredible effort in meeting the demand for testing, to all health care providers and workers who have played their role

in confronting this shared emergency, and to our partners at Councils and Civil Defence and other agencies. And to everyone in our community who have made personal sacrifices to stay home and stop the virus from spreading. I cannot thank you enough.

We have made incredible progress, but our challenges are not over yet. Covid-19 remains in our community, and around the world.

The restrictions upon us, and the vigilance expected of us, remain.

And we have work to do. As we move out of Alert Level 4, we must turn our attention to the constant, pressing health needs of our community that have not gone away, just because we’ve had a deadly virus to contend with.

A priority is to make progress on care such as outpatient appointments and elective surgeries that have been delayed, but are still much needed. We need to check in on those who may have avoided seeking care in the past weeks, and need to be available to those whose mental health and wellbeing has been impacted by the strain of the recent events. Catching up will take time, and we thank you for your understanding.

We also need to take a moment to reflect on what we have learned, and what changes in the health system we want to keep. The telephone triage system in GP practices, or online outpatient appointments that mean patients can avoid unnecessary travel, are not just conveniences, they are improvements. We have wished for a more agile health system; the fact we can establish mass testing centres or reconfigure services in a matter of days tells us this is more possible than we might have believed.

One thing we’ve certainly learned is that by working together we can achieve extraordinary results. Thank you again.

## New call centre, 0800 number streamlines assessment and referrals for possible COVID-19 testing

A new centralised call service and free phone number – **0800 VIRUS19 (0800 847 8719)** – is helping streamline assessment and possible testing for COVID-19 in the Southern region.

The new service based at WellSouth’s Dunedin office is making it easier for patients to inquire about and to access COVID-19 testing. The new service also helps ensure that patients who don’t need testing will not have to ‘leave their bubble’ unnecessarily.

Six phone lines are staffed by clinicians who assess and triage patients and refer, where appropriate, for testing. Patients can go on to be tested at a Community

Based Assessment Centre (CBAC), their own general practice or a designated practice, whichever is most appropriate and convenient.

Testing for COVID-19 is being conducted by most general practices, at three CBACs in the Southern region – in Dunedin, Queenstown and Invercargill. There are also six Designated Practices where people who don’t have a GP, or who don’t know who their doctor is, can be referred for testing. These are: Fiordland Medical Centre, He Puna Waiora Wellness Centre, Kurow Medical, Mosgiel Health Centre, Te Kāika, and Wanaka/Aspiring medical centres.



If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, please seek medical advice.

- Runny nose
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of smell
- Fever