

COVID-19 UPDATE

Local COVID-19 cases, including a breakdown of Local Government Area and postcodes.



Health
Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District

Tuesday, 11 January 2022

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District COVID-19 update

ISLHD case numbers

For the 24 hour period to 8pm last night, there were 1448 new COVID-19 cases detected by PCR testing for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District. Details are as follows:

- 896 cases from Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA)
- 289 cases from Shellharbour LGA
- 205 cases from Shoalhaven LGA
- 58 cases from Kiama LGA

As increasingly people follow NSW Health's advice to use rapid antigen tests for diagnosing COVID-19, the number of PCR tests will underestimate the true number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19.

There have been 17,040 community acquired COVID-19 cases reported since 16 June 2021 (cases not necessarily acquired within the Local Health District).

As at 8pm, 10 January there were 74 patients in hospital in the District as a result of COVID-19 (please note, this total may include patients who are no longer COVID-19 positive).

Local COVID-19 update

Facility updates

The decision has been made to extend the temporary closure of the Bulli Hospital Urgent Care Centre until mid-February. This will enable a continuation of the arrangement whereby available medical staff, who normally work within the Centre, will be redeployed to support the District's emergency teams.

There will be no impact on inpatient services at Bulli Hospital, and medical care for inpatients will continue as usual. The District's priority is to ensure that we are able to run our four Emergency Departments at full capacity during this critical time.

The same extension will apply to the Sub-Acute Mental Health Unit at Shoalhaven Hospital, which has been temporarily repurposed for use as a Special Health Accommodation facility.

Some staff usually providing care in the Sub Acute facility will continue to work within the area's Acute Community Mental Health Teams, where demand has increased since the start of the pandemic. The District has increased the capacity of our community teams to ensure care can be provided to people needing support in their homes by virtual care, or face to face where required and safe to do so.

Acute Mental Health Services remain in place across the District.

Elective Surgery

In line with the NSW Premier's announcement last week, to alleviate pressure on the hospital system and staff, the suspension of all non-urgent elective surgery requiring an overnight stay in hospital, has been extended through to February.

All emergency surgery and elective surgery classified as urgent will continue to be performed during this period. In addition, the District will continue to carry out day-only surgical procedures (that do not require an overnight admission), which will enable additional bed capacity within our hospitals.

COVID Testing

As per NSW Health advice, most people can now use a rapid antigen test (RAT) result to confirm they are positive for COVID-19. A positive result on a RAT is currently a reliable indicator of active COVID-19 infection and PCR testing to confirm the diagnosis is no longer recommended in most situations. More information can be found on the [getting tested for COVID-19 fact sheet](#).

In view of this, most people presenting to the District's COVID Assessment Clinics will be offered rapid screening with a RAT. People with a positive RAT result should regard themselves as a confirmed case and follow the advice for [people testing positive for COVID-19](#).

People who need a COVID-19 test but who have a negative COVID-19 RAT will be offered COVID-19 PCR testing as has been the practice since the start of the pandemic.

Please note, RAT kits are not available at any of our Emergency Departments for general personal use.

Hospital Birthing Unit COVID-19

The District provided updated information on its website over the weekend regarding COVID-19 requirements in our hospital birthing units. Given the significantly high levels of COVID-19 transmission within the community, stringent measures are in place throughout all hospitals, including birthing units, for the safety of all.

We recognise the importance of women having a partner or support person with them during birth. Women can be supported by one person who will be screened via Rapid Antigen Test by staff before entering the birthing unit. If the support person returns a positive test, they will not be permitted to enter the birthing unit as they will need to self-isolate under current public health orders.

Women due to have their baby are being asked to have additional support people on standby, should their initial partner/support people test positive. Only COVID negative support people will be permitted to enter the Birthing Unit.

If the birthing woman is COVID positive, she can still have a COVID negative support person. However, that support person will then be deemed a close contact and subsequently need to commence a 7 day isolation period after leaving the birthing unit.

The same partner / support person is permitted in the maternity ward after birth from 8am to 8pm, unless the birthing woman is COVID positive. Visitors are not permitted on the maternity ward for COVID positive women. The partner / support person must undergo a Rapid Antigen Test every 3 days on arrival at the maternity ward. If the partner / support person tests positive to COVID they will not be permitted into the ward and they will need to self-isolate under current public health orders.

We acknowledge these are challenging circumstances for everyone, but maintain the safety of all of our patients and staff remains our biggest priority right now.

Postcode breakdown

Below we have provided postcodes for confirmed cases reported today as a guide to alert the community who live in these areas that COVID-19 may be circulating in their suburb and surrounds. We do this to ensure all residents within the postcode know they need to be extra vigilant when leaving their home, when monitoring for symptoms and getting tested if they feel unwell. Individual suburb breakdowns are not provided as it does not accurately reflect where cases may have been during their infectious period.

Wollongong LGA – 896 cases

- 2500 – 229
- 2502 – 59
- 2505 – 11
- 2506 – 25
- 2508 – 30
- 2515 – 45
- 2516 – 26
- 2517 – 57
- 2518 – 86
- 2519 – 77
- 2525 – 59
- 2526 – 61
- 2530 – 131

Shellharbour LGA – 289 cases

- 2527 – 90
- 2528 – 89
- 2529 – 110

Shoalhaven LGA – 205 cases

- 2535 – 9
- 2538 – 6
- 2539 – 32
- 2540 – 92
- 2541 – 66

Kiama LGA – 58 cases

- 2533 – 49
- 2534 – 9

To view all case data for our District, visit our website: <https://bit.ly/ISLHD-case-numbers>

For a full list of local testing clinic locations visit: <https://bit.ly/ISLHD-COVID-testing>.