DATE: 6 April 2020

SUBJECT: COVID-19 increased testing

Please attribute to a NSW Health spokesperson:

NSW Health is increasing our testing, particularly around areas where there are some community transmissions and areas where there have been clusters.

These areas are: Waverley, Woollahra, Dee Why, Manly, Ryde, Macquarie Park, Broken Hill, Lake Macquarie, Manning, Nowra and South Nowra, Byron and Port Macquarie.

These are areas which we believe may be at elevated risk of community transmission, and we are encouraging people in these areas with symptoms to be tested for COVID-19. Symptoms include fever and/or flu-like symptoms such as cough, sore throat or shortness of breath.

By finding those cases early and identifying appropriate isolation and quarantining of close contacts, we can help prevent onward transmission in the community.

This approach is in line with national COVID-19 control guidelines, which recommend different testing criteria for different risk settings.

NSW Health is lowering the clinical thresholds for testing individual patients in these areas and asking anyone with a fever OR acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, sore throat) to be tested for COVID-19.

These recommendations are also being shared with NSW GPs and other clinicians to help implement this increased testing in the targeted areas.

The full list of COVID-19 clinics is available online at:
https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus-clinics.aspx