

DATE: Friday 24 July

SUBJECT: Masks in ISLHD facilities

Please attribute to Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Chief Executive Margot Mains

As community transmission of COVID-19 in parts of the state continues, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District has increased precautions within its facilities, in line with advice from NSW Health.

ISLHD Chief Executive, Margot Mains said the District was continuing to respond quickly to help keep patients and staff as safe as possible as the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve.

“While there is currently no evidence of community transmission in the Illawarra Shoalhaven and our case numbers remain low, this additional precautionary measure is being taken to ensure our strong position is maintained and the risk of potential spread is reduced,” Ms Mains said.

“From today all health care staff, patients (where possible) and visitors will be required to wear a mask when in a health facility (children 12 years and under are not required to wear a mask).

“The District thanks staff and the community for their ongoing support in these challenging times.”

This advice applies to hospital and community health settings.

Hospital visiting hours will also change to the following: 11am -1pm and 5-7pm.

Visitors should wear their own mask. The facility may provide masks where possible, but stocks will need to be prioritised for staff and patients.

As previously advised, only one visitor is allowed in each visiting session for each patient.

It is preferable that an individual does not stay with a patient longer than two hours, therefore it is recommended that the same person does not visit in both sessions in one day.

The community is urged to remember that **masks should be used in addition to, but not in place of, other precautions such as hand hygiene and physical distancing.**

The NSW Clinical Excellence Commission and NSW Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) are continuously monitoring the evolving situation.