

To the Allied Health sector and professional associations,

Yesterday, Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos, announced an easing of restrictions for allied health and other health care providers in metropolitan Melbourne during the second step, from the 28th September.

This means that more people in metropolitan Melbourne will be able to access face to face allied health care. Further detail related to each step of the Victorian *roadmap to reopening* will be released shortly however I have been advised that this recent decision will allow all Ahpra registered allied health professions as well as audiology, dietetics, exercise physiology, orthotists and prosthetists, social work and speech pathology to provide essential face to face services;

- to prevent a significant deterioration in functional independence which would result in an escalation of care needs (such as increased frequency in treatment, significant increase in pain, specialist input, or substantial increase in recovery time as a result of delayed care)
- for assessment and diagnostic purposes for those people whose care has been delayed during stage 4 restrictions, and where further delay likely to result in deterioration (e.g. diagnostic imaging and assessment for prescription of assistive technology)
- to provide essential pre-operative or post-operative elective surgery care

Other healthcare providers, such as myotherapy, naturopathy or remedial massage therapy will also be able to provide face to face services which would prevent a significant deterioration in functional independence resulting in an escalation of care needs (such as increased frequency in treatment, significant increase in pain, specialist input, or substantial increase in recovery time as a result of delayed care) for those people who are on an endorsed care plan.

When metropolitan Melbourne reaches the threshold for step 3, indicative modelling suggests this will be around 26 Oct, people in metropolitan Melbourne will be able to recommence seeing their allied health provider or other primary health care provider for all elements of their health care needs, except for indoor group classes.

All allied health services as well other primary health care services will continue to remain open as per step 3 restrictions in regional and rural Victoria, with the exception of indoor group sessions. However, outdoor classes in groups of up to 10 are permitted.

I am hopeful indoor group exercise classes (including clinical pilates) will be able to recommence from the final step.

I appreciate how challenging it has been for everybody as we navigate our way through this pandemic. I'm incredibly grateful for the ongoing support of our health care workers who are doing their part to provide essential services whilst also keeping Victorians safe.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DM', is positioned below the closing text.

**Donna Markham**

Chief Allied Health Officer

Safer Care Victoria

Date: 17 / 09 /2020