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**Catholic
Social Services**
people helping people *āwhina tātou*

In these times of Covid



As Covid moves closer to our communities there are increasing levels of anxiety and concern which can cause people to become isolated.

Are you wondering “what can I do?” especially for those who have caught Covid and are isolating at home. Once you are told to stay home, you can’t go out and it might be some time before welfare services kick in. We know that most people do want to help others, but hesitancy occurs because we are unsure what to do, or we are afraid of catching Covid ourselves.

This Pānui offers a couple of ways people and parish communities can reach out. We can help as individuals or we can organise ourselves as a community, through parish newsletters and mail drops, phone calls and social media. This way everyone knows what is happening and who needs to be contacted.

Support can be for people who have to self-isolate because they have the Delta variant or for people who are living alone and reluctant to venture out.

To reach out safely and respectfully, here are some simple hints and tips.

Practical recommendations and ideas:

- Let your pastoral team know you want to organise a group of willing volunteers to reach out- the pastoral team may well help you.
- This could be through practical support like deliveries (non-contact) or regular phone calls.
- Organise yourselves to pick up medical supplies, drop off baking, run errands, or make regular phone calls to check-in on isolated people in your community
- Invite your parish community to donate money to buy facemasks, hand sanitiser, grocery or petrol vouchers, so volunteers can pick up some basic necessities to deliver. (See self-isolation list). This money should go into the parish account for transparency, and accountability. Someone on the finance committee may volunteer to co-ordinate this
- Take advantage of CSS training and supported online meetings
- Encourage your local community to reach out, or get involved in your plans
- Utilise the parish website, Facebook page and newsletter to let your community know what you are doing

Basic recommendations for safe outcomes:

- Draw up a list of volunteers, with contact numbers, what they can offer, and how much time they can give
- Anyone making phone calls on behalf of the parish community and has access to personal information must be Police Vetted and have signed a parish confidentiality agreement
- Undertake some basic personal safety training. CSS offers this free of charge.
- Organise a central phone number with a clear answerphone message. This number does not need to be monitored or answered 24/7 but it does need regular checking.
- Follow the check list (below) when calling for the first time. It is important that you have the caller’s permission to give their name and phone number to one of your volunteers. E.g. when a home delivery is required.

- People making phone calls do not have to be vaccinated
- People picking up and dropping off goods should be fully vaccinated.
- If you intend to be dropping off goods to people isolating at home, ensure all your volunteers have correct PPE e.g. masks, gloves.
- All deliveries to a person's home or to where they are self-isolating should be contactless.

Start with Who and What You Know

- Make a list of people you know in your community who might be living alone, or are unwell and isolating. Contact your parish office and let them know who you are taking responsibility for calling. (It is ok if more than one person in the parish is calling the same person, but helpful for parish leadership to know where the gaps are.)
- You don't have to call everyone, just the people you know and for whom you have phone numbers. The Privacy Act means that the parish cannot give you people's numbers without their permission, so just work with what you have.
- Your phone conversations must be confidential. No information can be repeated to another person outside of emergency services without permission of the person you are talking to.
- You do not have to be a professional or social worker to connect in a meaningful way with someone, even with someone who is struggling. The fact that you cared enough to call will help.
- Having said that – sometimes people do need extra help. With their permission you should call a local agency health line or emergency services (e.g. ambulance) for advice and help if you are really concerned for the well-being of someone you are calling.
- Be prepared to spend time with the people you call. A hurried call can be misinterpreted and cause people to feel they are a burden.
- When you call, please check that it is convenient to talk. Be prepared to call back at a time that suits them.
- Prepare for the call. Maybe you can write a list of icebreaker questions. They shouldn't be too intrusive or personal the first couple of times.
- While it is OK to share a little about yourself - in fact it can help the person you call to begin to talk, remember that the call is not about you - it is about the person you are calling. Some silence on a call is OK.
- Resist spreading gossip, dire predictions or alarming news.
- At the end of the call, ask if you can call again. Finish the call by assuring them you enjoyed the chance to chat to them.

Consider this as Psychological First Aid (PFA):

- Comforting someone who is in distress and helping them feel safe and calm.
- Assessing needs and concerns.
- Providing emotional support.
- Helping to provide/ access immediate basic needs, such as food and water.
- Listening to people but not pressuring them to talk.
- Helping people obtain information, services and social support.

Active listening is a key component of PFA.

- Actively concentrate on what the affected person says.
- Do not interrupt or try to assure them that everything will be all right.
- Take time to listen when people describe what happened. Telling their story will help people understand and eventually accept their situation.

Psychological first aid (PFA) is not...

- Something only professionals do.
- Professional counselling or therapy.
- Encouraging a detailed discussion of the event that has caused the distress.
- Asking someone to analyse what has happened to them.
- Pressuring people to share their feelings and reactions to an event.

Self-Care is Important

- Read the resources supplied here – they will help you in your interactions with the people you are calling. They may also help with your own wellbeing.
- If you find yourself feeling stressed or have concerns for your own wellbeing, then use the resources in this booklet to find someone to reach out to or contact CSS at reception@wn.catholic.org.nz and one of our team will call you back.

RESOURCES

Check list for callers when you make calls

Name	
Obtain permission to give information to volunteer	<i>Reassure caller that all volunteers are Police Vetted and have signed a confidentiality agreement. This is where a home delivery may be required.</i>
Phone number	
Address	
How can we help?	<i>e.g. regular phone calls, errands, pick up medical or grocery supplies</i>
What are your ongoing basic needs? E.g. food, prescription medicines	
How are you feeling today?	

Do you need medical attention?	
	<i>Add your own questions in here</i>

Recommended list for Self Isolation at Home as supplied by:



Te Kupenga Whakaoti Mahi Patunga
National Network of Family Violence Services

This list is designed as a guide to help you prepare for self-isolation at home. You can personalise it and pass it along to your community.

Should you develop the [symptoms](#) of Covid, please get a test as soon as practicable and consult your medical professional.

At Home

- Tissues
- Paracetamol
- Heat and cool packs
- Iceblocks
- Electrolytes
- Vicks or eucalyptus for steaming
- Saline nasal rinses/sprays
- Kawakawa or other balm
- Bowl and towel for head steaming
- Throat spray/lozenges
- Extra pillows and blankets
- Prepare to grocery shop online if possible or set up an account and delivery with a local grocery store if rurally located.
- Anything that you would need in a civil emergency. Once you are told to stay home you can't go out and it might be some time before welfare services kick in so things like ...
- Candles
- Batteries
- Matches
- Water
- Tinned food etc
- Pet Food
- Good books
- List of movies to catch up on
- Dust off the board games and get out the cards

***Be at your optimum health so if you do get Covid,
you are giving your body its best chance.***

- If you are not vaccinated - get vaccinated

- If you smoke - then stop
- If you feel like you are overweight - make a plan to start addressing it now
- If you are not eating right - make a plan to start eating right- [Heart Foundation 7 day balanced meal planner](#)
- If you have diabetes, COPD, a chronic condition - get on top of it, sort it out and manage it well now.
- If you are due for a smear, mammogram, blood test, massage, physio appointment, counselling appointment etc. do it now and keep these up to date.

Health Navigator is highly recommended as the go to for whānau about anything related to medications and conditions when looking for reliable information.

<https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/>

COVID-19 POSITIVE – CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

With the government planning to eventually manage most COVID-19 infections in the community, the need for reliable information to support New Zealanders is more important than ever. With this in mind, Health Navigator NZ has developed the following resources:

- [COVID-19 positive – care at home](#)
- [How to use a pulse oximeter in adults](#)
- [Positions to make your breathing easier](#)
- [COVID-19 positive – caring for your child at home](#)
- [How to use a pulse oximeter in children](#)
- [COVID-19 positive – how to quarantine \(taratahi\) at home](#)
- [COVID-19 positive – care diaries](#)
- [COVID-19 positive – supporting your mental wellbeing](#)
- [How to use a thermometer](#)
- [Breathing rate](#)
- [Dehydration](#)

How to Get your Vaccine Pass

<https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccination-certificates/my-vaccine-pass/> or call **0800 222 478**

Medical Exemption

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/my-covid-record-proof-vaccination-status/covid-19-vaccine-exemptions-and-certificates#process>

Some more useful links

MOH Covid website: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

<https://www.allright.org.nz/>

<https://mentalhealth.org.nz/getting-through-together>

<https://www.begreat.co.nz/5-a-day-for-great-mental-health>

<https://www.allright.org.nz/uploads/files/GTT-workplace-resource-1.pdf>

<https://mentalhealth.org.nz/five-ways-to-wellbeing>

<https://1737.org.nz>

How Catholic Social Services Can Assist You

- Call or email us on 04 3858642 or reception@wn.catholic.org.nz if you need some “Caring for the Carer” – we are happy to do that for you.
- We offer social work assistance
- We train volunteers in the community to work safely and effectively with vulnerable people
- We provide training and companionship for people suffering loss or grief through Seasons For Growth
- We offer peer supervision for groups volunteering in parish communities
- We can facilitate referrals to other sector organisations, e.g. St Vincent De Paul or various foodbanks, Work and Income, Kāinga Ora, Women’s Refuge, Upper Hutt Housing Trust, Greenstone Doors (practical help for Mums and babies).

The team at Catholic Social Services want to thank you all for how you care for one another. We hope that this booklet will help you. We also want you to know we are only a phone call away (04 385-8642) if you want advice or simply need to talk.

Ngā manaakitanga

**The Team at Catholic Social Services
Wellington**