



Supporting our clients during **COVID-19**

20 March 2020

Update to clients

Dear valued clients,

The health and wellbeing of our staff and clients are paramount. Given the evolving situation of Coronavirus (COVID-19) within Australia and across the world, we would like to provide you with information and an outline of the changes we are putting in place. Our goal is to ensure the well-being of our staff and clients and to help do our part to slow the spread of the virus.

We would like to reassure you that there is no immediate concern for our staff and clients, and we remain open with the same operating hours and continuing business as usual.

What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

The following information is referenced through the Australian Government websites and kept up to date daily.

As you may be aware, Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. Symptoms may include the following:

- fever
- flu-like symptoms such as cough, sore throat, and fatigue
- shortness of breath

Some people recover easily, others may get very sick very quickly. There is evidence that it spreads from person to person.

NSW Health information on what is Coronavirus:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov#what-is-coronavirus-covid19>

How can we help prevent the spread of infection?

To reduce potential exposure or transmission of COVID-19, please observe good hygiene practices when visiting all our centres. Everyone should practice good hygiene to protect against possible infections. Good hygiene includes:

1. Wash your hands with soap under running water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand rub if you don't have immediate access to soap and water. Dry with paper towel or a hand dryer.
2. Cover our mouth while coughing or sneezing with a tissue or your elbow.
3. Avoiding close contact with others and adhere to social distancing which means distance 1.5 metres between yourself and other persons.
4. See a health care professional if you start to feel unwell. **You must contact your GP or hospital before you arrive** and tell them of your symptoms, travel history and whether you may have been in close contact with a potential case of coronavirus (COVID-19).

If you are feeling unwell.....

- If out of hours, contact the Local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055.
- NSW Health has a free helpline, Health Direct, at 1800 022 222.
- The Federal Department of Health has set up a 24-hour COVID-19 Health Information Line at 1800 020 080.

Get the latest medical advice from the Australian Government:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-what-you-need-to-know>

The NSW Health information on symptoms of Coronavirus:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov#symptoms>

How is Interrelate keeping staff and clients safe?

Interrelate has a COVID-19 management plan and protocols in place. We have taken precautionary measures in lifting hygiene and health standards to protect our staff and clients. This includes the following;

- Increased cleaning and disinfecting (e.g. cleaning of toys).
- Placing hand sanitisers in public areas for clients and staff to use.
- A policy where staff or clients must stay home if they are showing any signs of illness.
- Posters in the toilet areas to remind people of good hygiene.
- Staff will not be attending local agency meetings or events.
- We are keeping a social distance (1.5 metres between people) in all office areas.
- Our one to one client work will be changed to a larger space to keep to the Health Department direction of 'social distancing'. If this cannot occur appointments can be done via skype to phone before cancelling.
- The option of moving appointments from face to face to phone or online.

How you can help to prevent the virus from spreading?

We are all doing our part to help in preventing the virus from spreading. You can help in the following ways:

- If you have returned from an overseas trip, in line with Australian Government guidelines around self-isolation, please don't visit our offices and follow the advice of Government to
- If you have cold or flu symptoms, please delay visiting our offices until your period of self-isolation is complete or your symptoms have resolved.
- Medical experts deem that social distancing (at least 1.5 metres) keeps people healthy and will help flatten the curve and slow down the spread of the virus. Please provide social distancing in our waiting areas and when having contact with our staff.
- Please use contactless payment methods and bring your own pen to complete any relevant forms.

The above measures are recommended as there is evidence that the virus spreads from person-to-person, most likely spread through close contact with an infectious person; contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze; or touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables) that have cough or sneeze droplets from an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face.

Additional resource:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov#how-it-spreads>

Caring for and Supporting our Clients during COVID-19

Interrelate is committed to providing quality services to our clients. As part of service delivery, we are currently offering client choice to the way that you receive services including phone, online (Zoom) or face-to-face.

At this stage, we are still delivering face-to-face appointments if a client is in good health to attend.

If you have cold or flu-like symptoms leading up to your Interrelate appointment, please call us on 1300 i relate (1300 473 528) to discuss alternatives like phone, online (Zoom) or rescheduling.

Scheduled appointments

If you have an upcoming face to face appointment, we will be contacting you and offering the choice of moving your appointment to a phone or online (Zoom) appointment or alternatively postpone it.

We are currently still able to offer some face to face appointments but will be adhering to the social distancing guidelines.

Children's Contact Service

Supervised contacts are still currently taking place. Please be reassured that our centres, including toys, are thoroughly cleaned between visits. Alternatively, you may talk to the Coordinator about online (Zoom) or phone options for your supervised contact.

Relationship Education Group Programs

All face to face groups will be cancelled on an ongoing basis. However, online education or the option of a one of one session is available.

Fee Structure

Our existing fee structure applies to all service delivery types (face-to-face, Skype, Zoom, and phone).

Remaining cyber-safe

Finally, there have been reports of "fake websites" impersonating health organisations, exploiting COVID-19 fears and attempting to obtain personal details. Remaining cyber-safe is critical so please carefully read all emails before signing up to any mailing lists relating to COVID-19 updates.

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation during this time of heightened concern.

The Interrelate team