



9th of April, 2020

Hi there,

Here's an update of some of the things I've been doing during the past fortnight in Parliament and across the Northern Metropolitan Region.

Check [here](#) for the most up to date information and advice from Victoria's Chief Health Officer on Covid-10.



Crossbench call for oversight of Government's Covid-19 response

I joined with my crossbench colleagues to call on the state government to allow for an oversight mechanism for decision making during the Covid-19 emergency.

We all need to work together to flatten the curve, so I accept that during this period there will be extraordinary actions taken by the Government. However, significant infringements on the civil liberties of Victorians are occurring and it is appropriate that these are scrutinised.

The Andrews Labor Government should not be afraid of analysis of their decision making – they should welcome it and in my view, the independents and minor party members are well placed to provide this oversight.

You can read the signed joint statement [here](#).



Covid risks for detained asylum seekers

More than 60 male refugees who have been 'medevaced' to Australia from Manus and Naru are being detained in close confines at the Mantra Hotel in Preston, without appropriate social distancing measures being put in place by the authorities. Some have been at the hotel since July last year. The Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA) detention centre is also currently overcrowded.

These refugees find themselves in Victoria because of their poor health and an outbreak of Covid-19 would surely be disastrous and increase pressure on our health system. I wrote to the Premier with these concerns and urged him to raise the issue at National Cabinet. I hope that we will see support for a release into community detention for these vulnerable people, so that their health can be appropriately protected.



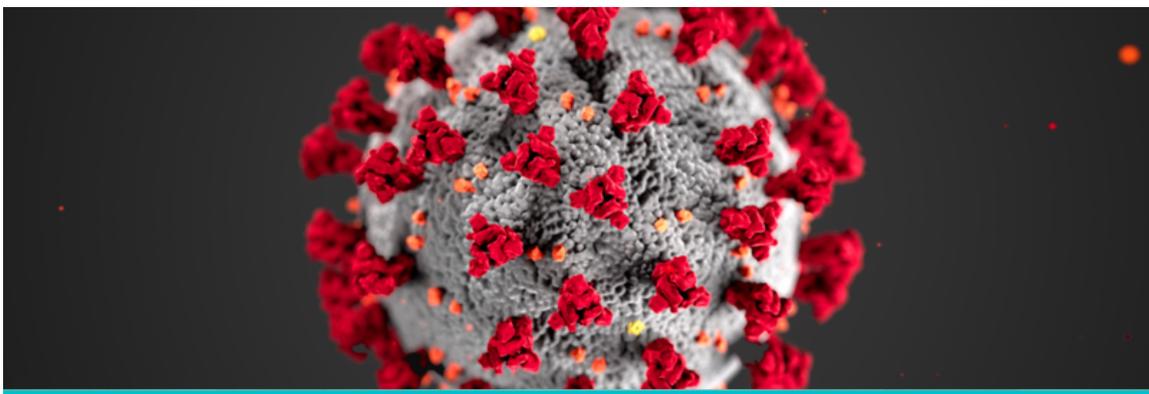
Optimism in Covid-19 - By Fiona Patten

Tuesday was a low day for me. I know it was an awful day for many others, especially survivors of sexual abuse and the families of Covid 19 victims. These days are testing for most of us in ways we could not have foreseen even a couple of weeks ago.

I have been on my own for a number of weeks and working at home for two. My partner who lost his job, doesn't qualify for Job Keeper because of my salary. Rightly so. But he's looking after his elderly mother interstate and I haven't seen him in a month. However all my family are in a safe place and I am one of the lucky ones to still be working.

I am generally a pretty happy person but these past few days have surprised me.

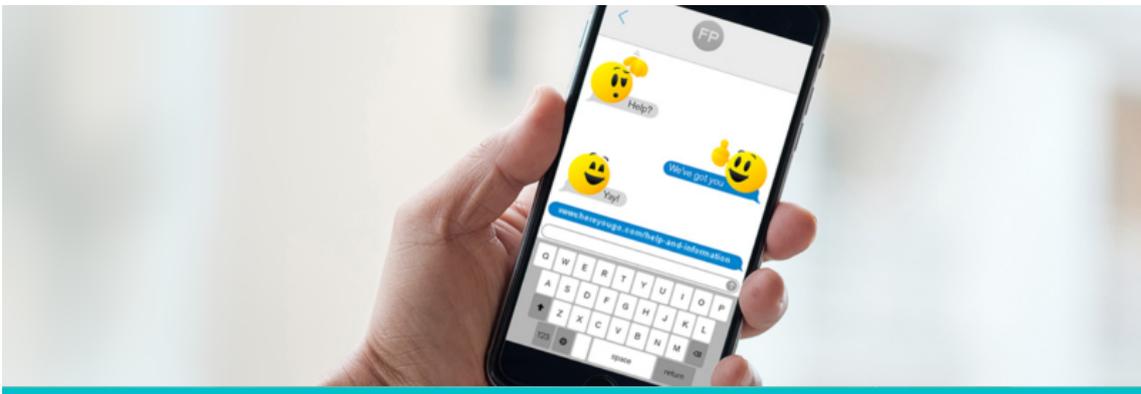
Continue reading [here](#).



Covid-19 data

For those who are following the crisis closely, aatishb.com/covidtrends/ is a great website for looking at worldwide cases on a logarithmic and linear scale.

Daily number updates can be confusing, and make it difficult to see whether we are winning the fight. This tool makes it easier to visualise the situation and to have bigger perspective on the fight. Thanks to one of our readers, Cameron for the tip!



Need to contact us? Send a text!

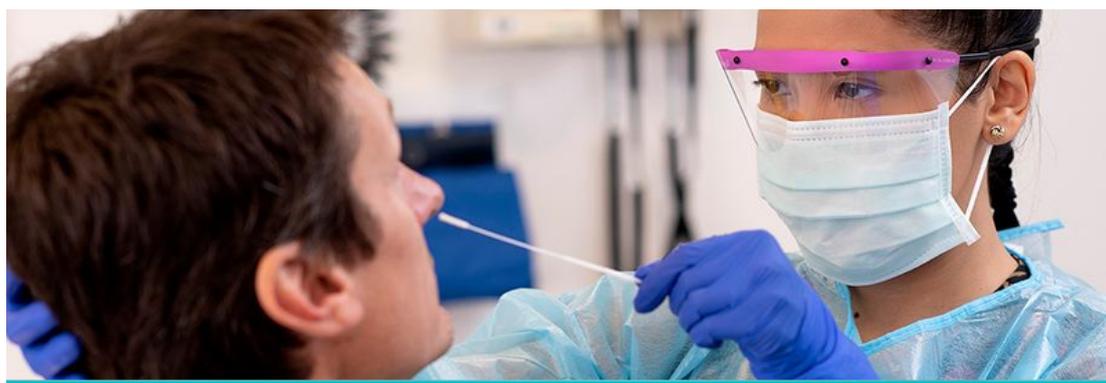
Our staff are all working from home, but our phone lines are still open. In fact, we've recently added a mobile phone number for people wishing to communicate with us via text. Text us on 0405 115 259.



Covid information from your council

Here's a list of the council websites with information on covid-19 related services, programs and support in Northern Metropolitan. They're offering a great deal of support so it is very worthwhile checking what might be available to you in your municipality:

- [Banyule City Council](#)
- [City of Darebin](#)
- [Hume City Council](#)
- [City of Melbourne](#)
- [Moreland City Council](#)
- [City of Whittlesea](#)
- [City of Yarra](#)



Royal Melbourne Hospital Coronavirus appeal

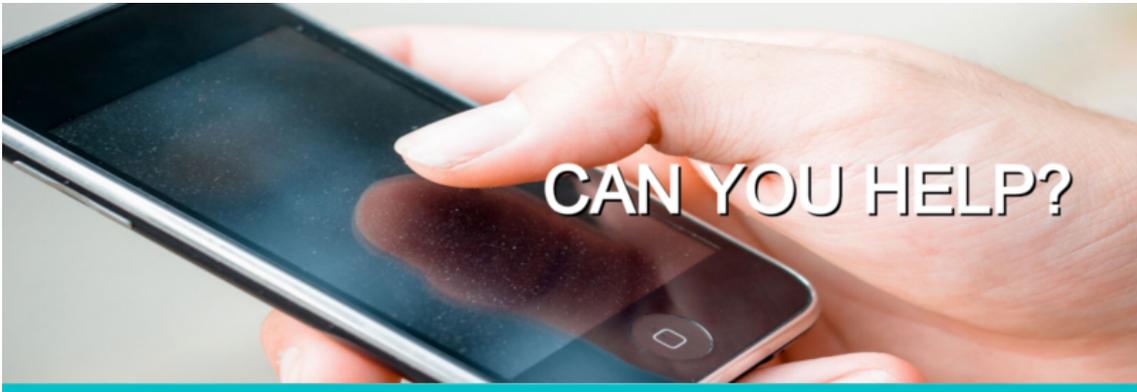
The Royal Melbourne Hospital is right at the centre of combatting Covid-19 in Victoria. For weeks, they've been doing everything possible to prepare for and fight Covid-19, now a global pandemic.

RMH are one of five global WHO Collaborating Centres for Research on Influenza, and also operate the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Lab (VIDRL). They are currently working with international partners on a vaccine. It's likely to take a year or more to develop.

In the meantime, they are treating more patients in the hospital and in the community and we need your support. At times of national emergency, we all need to pull together.

Please send a gift to help RMH fight COVID-19.

[DONATE](#)



Donate your old smartphone

Do you have an old smartphone and charger you no longer need? Help the Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education ([PRACE](#)) by donating it!

Established in 1993, PRACE is a registered not-for-profit charitable organisation committed to meeting the language, literacy and numeracy, vocational training and further education needs of the local community.

As the number of coronavirus cases increases, many of their students are unable to attend classes and will transition to remote learning. But, not all of them have phones that will enable them to make video calls.

Students in our lower level English classes are unable to converse in English without facial and body language prompts, making regular phone calls almost impossible. Your donation will support their learning journey by enabling them to video conference with their teachers and continue their classes from home.

Staying connected to family, services and support people is vital at this time of increased physical and social isolation. Your help will enable PRACE to stay in touch with their students and make sure they have enough food and personal goods.

Working smartphones and chargers can be posted to PRACE, PO Box 510,
Reservoir VIC 3073 or call 9462 6077 to arrange for a PRACE staff member to pick-up from
you.

Be kind, wash your hands and enjoy your Easter long weekend at home!

Fiona Patten MP