

College Conferences and Events – COVID-19 Response

Members will be aware of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) that is currently causing disruptions, illnesses and some deaths in a number of countries. Whilst COVID-19 has caused mostly minor symptoms for the majority of those who have become infected, for a small percentage infection has led to pneumonia and ICU admission, and for a small subset has resulted in death.

The primary objective in managing this disease is to limit the speed of its spread. Public health measures such as hand washing, isolation of sick individuals and minimising close contact will prolong the spread and flatten out the peak numbers of infections. Slowing down the spread will keep the number of high acuity infections (and subsequent ICU demands) to a manageable number. This ensures the health system has the capacity to manage this small group of patients well and is not overwhelmed by significant numbers of infected persons all at once. Smaller numbers of sick will be more effectively managed by health systems which will result in better outcomes. In time, vaccines will be developed and become available to provide immunity to those who are at risk and who have not yet been infected.

Based on the Australian Government's assessment of the current status of COVID-19 / coronavirus in Australia, and in order to support these public health initiatives, the College has decided to proactively manage our activities to minimise the likelihood of COVID-19 spreading from person to person at one of our events.

Event Attendance

In line with [Australian Government advice](#); we advise that members, event attendees and staff do not attend ACP conferences or events if, on the day of the event:

- You are unwell, including exhibiting symptoms ranging from mild to severe illness including pneumonia, and include (but are not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath,
- You have been or have any reason to suspect you've been exposed to someone with or suspected to have COVID-19,
- You, or someone you live with, are in self-isolation because you/they have visited or travelled through any Category 1 country within the past 14 days (for business or personal reasons), or
- You are in self-isolation due to having had contact with someone with suspected or diagnosed COVID-19.

Note: In relation to events with an attendance fee, the College will refund the ticket price to anyone unable to attend due to following the above advice.

Event procedures

The College will be instigating social distancing and good hygiene practices at our events based on [WHO advice](#). We expect attendees to:

- Wash their hands regularly / use hand sanitiser (the College will ensure hand sanitiser is available at all events),
- Minimise touching of their eyes, nose and mouth,
- Minimise physical contact with other event participants,
- Maintain at least one metre distance between someone who is coughing or sneezing, and
- Practice respiratory hygiene (such as coughing or sneezing into bent elbow or tissue and disposing of that tissue appropriately).

At College events where food or drink is provided, we will be instigating individual drinks, meal or snack packs to reduce the risk of transmission for attendees. For shorter education events (under three hours), if suitable food options aren't available or reasonably priced, then no food may be provided.

Meeting your learning needs

The College will be doing our utmost to continue to deliver quality education and understands that members may stay away from some events due to individual concerns about COVID-19. As such, we will endeavour to live stream and record as many of our events as possible and make them available online for members.

Travel Restrictions

The College has noticed work related travel restrictions being implemented at universities and ambulance services, which will reduce the number of attendees at our larger events. Some events planned where there is an expectation for most attendees to undertake air travel to attend will likely need to be re-scheduled for a later date or delivered as a live stream if suitable.

Changes to this advice

The College acknowledges that the situation with COVID-19 is rapidly changing and we will be following the advice of the Chief Medical Officer and Government. If the official advice changes, our in-person events may need to be cancelled. In the case of a cancelled event, the College will refund the ticket price to all registrants. The College will look to postpone and re-schedule events or turn them into online events (where possible).