

The COVID-19 Care Pathway process – levels of care

This Information Sheet has been developed by Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) for Queensland Health. To make sure help can be provided to the many people who are getting COVID-19 throughout Queensland, the government has developed a new COVID-19 Care Pathway.

The main change is that the person who needs health care has to make contact themselves by doing the COVID care self checker online [here](#), or contacting the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080. There are priority lines for people with disability carers and workers and you will get advice about which care pathway you need.

This Information Sheet provides information to people with disability and their supporters, with flowcharts of the new Care Pathway to manage COVID-19.

The flowcharts below use case studies of people with disability and map out the process for each of the care pathways and the things people with disability will need to think about at each point.

There are three Care Pathways:

Level 1



Recover at home

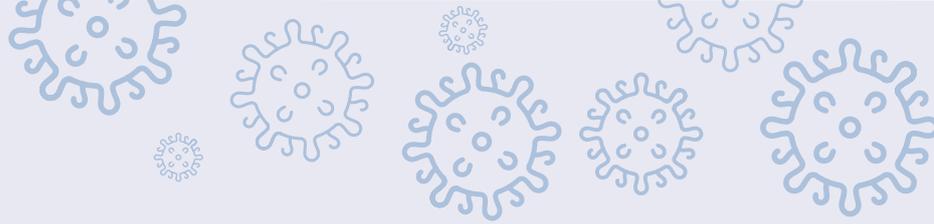
This is for most people who are well enough to manage their symptoms and recover at home.

Level 2



COVID care at home with GP support

This is for people who have an existing health condition that needs extra monitoring and care because they have increased risk/s. If this is you, you will need to organise with your GP to have appointments to monitor you. These may be telehealth appointments - each area and region will have different approaches in place for GP care depending on where you live.



Level 3



COVID care at home from a Virtual Hospital or admission to a Hospital

This is for people with a higher risk of serious illness due to more severe symptoms and existing health conditions. If you are assessed at this level you will stay at home but get daily calls from a hospital, medical monitoring devices if you need them, and you may even receive COVID medications. If you are getting care from the Virtual Hospital – you will not need to go to hospital, you will get ‘hospital type care’ and regular monitoring at your home.

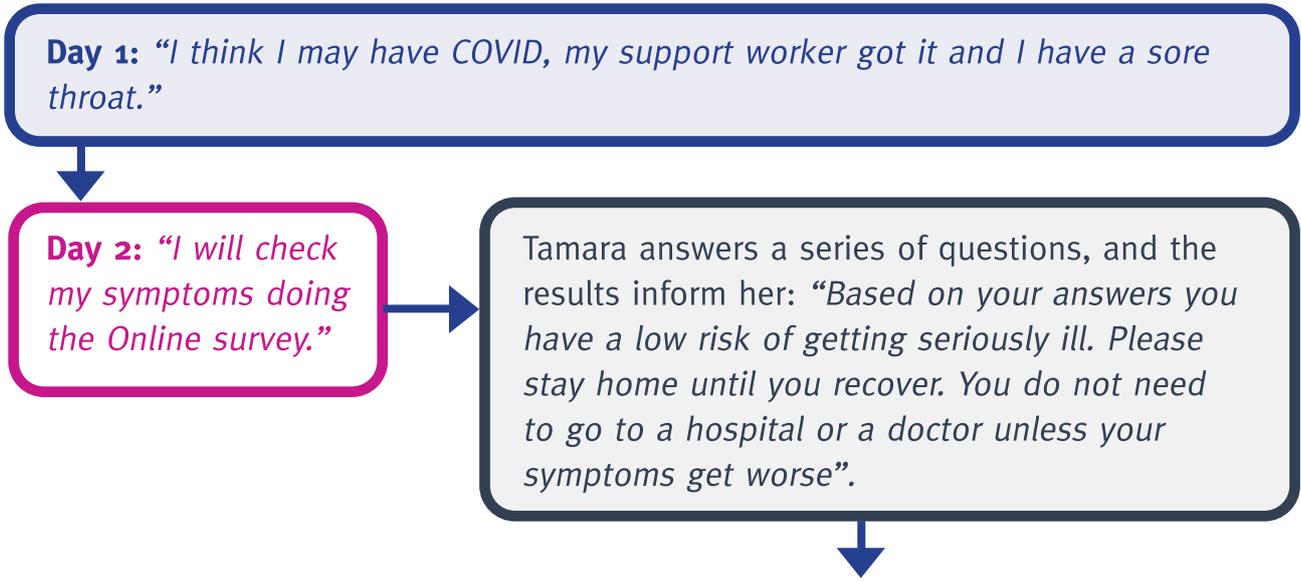
If you are assessed as very high risk, you will be admitted to hospital.

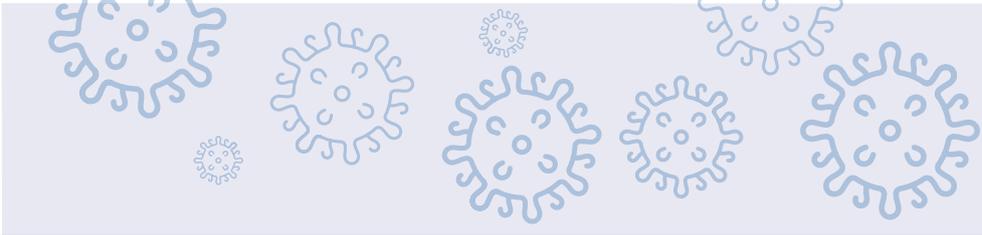
Care Pathways – Case Studies



Recover at home

Tamara is 43, fit and healthy and goes to the gym three times a week. She lives in Brisbane and uses a manual wheelchair for mobility. She has started to feel unwell and has a sore throat. She is worried she may have COVID as she just found out one of her support workers who goes to the gym with her got sick with it while on leave. Other than the sore throat Tamara has no other symptoms.





Day 2-6: Tamara spends the week resting, drinking water, and eating well. She takes some Panadol as needed. Her other support worker brings her some groceries, including fresh fruit and vegetables and makes her soup. She feels better by Day 5.



COVID care at home with GP support

Fiona is 67 years old and lives in Cairns. She has a mild intellectual disability and has diabetes and asthma. Sometimes Fiona forgets to take her medication and needs to be reminded by her community care support worker. Fiona feels unwell so her support worker talks to her about what to do next.

Day 1:
Fiona and her support worker Sara talk about how Fiona is not feeling well. She has a bad cough and is breathless. Sara uses Fiona's Pensioner Concession Card to get her a free RAT test. Fiona tests positive. Sara helps Fiona record her positive result online. Sara also helps Fiona complete the online COVID Health Check. With Fiona's permission she also lets the service know.

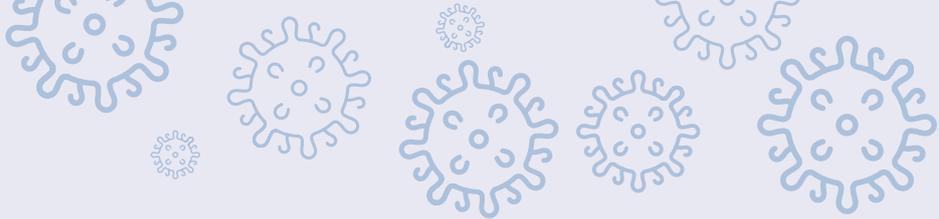


Day 2:
Fiona's cough is getting worse, so Sara talks to her about having a telehealth appointment with Fiona's GP. Fiona agrees and they are able to book one that afternoon. Taking into account Fiona's medical history, the GP is concerned about her breathing and makes a referral to the virtual (online) hospital.



Day 3:
The Virtual (online) Hospital starts treating Sarah after they got handover from her GP yesterday. Fiona continues to isolate at home. Her carer Sara is allowed to keep supporting her using full PPE.





Day 7:
Fiona has had no symptoms for the past 3 days. The Virtual (online) Hospital is happy to discharge her and forms a management plan with Sara and Fiona's GP.



COVID care at home from a Virtual Hospital or admission to a Hospital

Douglas is a 45 year old, proud Wakka Wakka man from Cherbourg. Douglas has diabetes and a partial leg amputation 3 years ago. He uses a manual wheelchair for mobility. He has received vaccination doses 1 and 2, but not a booster (to clarify eligibility for monoclonal). Douglas also takes medication for emphysema. Douglas doesn't feel well and contacts his Health Liaison Officer Shirley.

Day 1:
Douglas wakes up and doesn't feel well. He has a sore throat, is coughing worse than usual and has the sweats. He calls the Health Liaison Officer, Shirley.

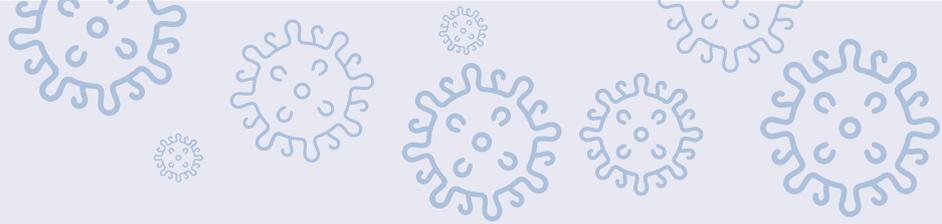


HLO Shirley arranges for Douglas to have a PCR test and completes the online survey with Douglas. Based on their answers, the survey classifies Douglas as High Risk. Shirley organises hospital admission for him, and his test comes back later positive for COVID.



Day 2:
Douglas is admitted into hospital. The treating doctor gives him fluids, regular pain relief and an infusion they are using to treat some high risk patients (monoclonal antibodies). The hospital staff also monitoring Douglas' diabetes and his breathing. Douglas is comfortable but concerned he might end up in ICU.





Day 5-6:

Douglas feels much better and is ready to be discharged. The hospital staff make a discharge plan with Douglas and Shirley.



Day 7:

Douglas is discharged and returns home. Part of the plan is that he will continue to see HLO Shirley for the next week and they will make a plan to return to hospital if necessary.

Remember there are three places you can go for information or advice throughout these care pathways:

1. The Queensland Health website for the online COVID Care Self Checker [here](#)
2. Ring the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080
3. Ring the Queensland Health COVID hotline on 134 268

**If you have serious symptoms or difficulty breathing,
please call 000 straight away or go to a hospital Emergency Department**

If you have COVID you need to go to hospital directly in a private car, or if that is not possible call an ambulance. Let them know you have COVID.