



POLICY

6.0 EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions that Better Together intends to take to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases that are epidemics or pandemics and control the transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

For the purpose of this policy, infectious diseases mean diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. This policy is focused on infectious diseases that are declared by the Federal Government or World Health Organisation to be an epidemic or pandemic.

Scope

This policy applies to all of the organisation's Staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

Policy Statement

From time to time infectious diseases develop into epidemics or pandemics which creates increased risks for the community. Better Together wishes as far as possible to protect its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public from infection or contagion by epidemics and/or pandemics.

Better Together's will facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public. Better Together will comply with all directions from authorised public health officers and recognised medical authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic.

Preamble

Better Together will, as far as possible, plan for and make advance preparations for the possibility that its operations will be affected by an epidemic or pandemic.

In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, Better Together will, as far as possible:

- Assist its clients, staff, volunteers and others, as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.
- Encourage and assist those who have reason to believe that they are at risk of contracting the (virus or contagion subject to the) epidemic or pandemic (order) to obtain a diagnosis.
- Support employees, volunteers, contractors and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
- Maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern.



In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic, Better Together will follow instructions set out by the World Health Organisation and local health authorities and government bodies. This requires people covered by this Policy to take the following precautions:

- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
- Maintain at least 1.5 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.
- Make sure you follow good hygiene, and encourage others to do the same. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze, and disposing of used tissues immediately.
- Stay at home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, ask your manager whether you can temporarily work from home.
- Keep up to date on the latest hotspots (cities or local areas where the pandemic or epidemic is spreading widely). If possible, avoid traveling to places - especially if you are more at risk.
- If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify your manager as soon as possible. It may be possible or necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until your recovery
- Seek medical advice promptly and follow the directions of your local health authority.

Notes

In carrying out the procedures listed below, Better Together will be guided by the information and directions provided by local health authorities and the World Health Organisation, and its occupational health and safety obligations.