



Colac Experience

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COVID RESPONSE



- PREPAREDNESS - Commenced in January 2020
 - Health service response
 - General Practitioner liaison
- Community Engagement
 - Establishment of Community Leaders Group (March)
 - Engaged with local media
 - Health Promotion – ‘Keep Colac Safe’ Campaign
 - Communication Strategy - https://youtu.be/kO6NG_Muy3k
 - ‘Let’s Get Back to None’ Campaign
- COVID Service response
 - Agile testing model
 - Contact tracing (led by Barwon Health Public Health Unit)
 - Monitoring (led by Barwon Health in collaboration with Colac Area Health)
 - Accommodation and social support (in collaboration with Timboon Health Service and local Government providers)

Colac Outbreaks



- Cluster 1: July 17 – 104 confirmed cases, and 335 primary close contacts
 - Predominantly involved the Australian Lamb Company (67 cases, 15 household contacts)
 - High risk setting, multiple production lines/shifts/areas
 - Culturally & Linguistically Diverse workforce, shared accommodation
 - Impact on local schools, ELC, gyms, services
 - Unlinked community transmission (23 non-ALC cases)
 - Controlled within 4 weeks, > 80% reduction in estimated cases
- Cluster 2: August 29 – 39 confirmed cases and 576 primary close contacts
 - Five workplaces, ELC, complex households, social networks
 - No unlinked community transmission, controlled within 2 weeks

Outbreak management



- Colac Area Health incident management team
- Emergency management team (part of State emergency management response)
 - DHHS, EMV, Dept. of Education, Local Government, local business etc
- Contact tracing and outbreak management
 - Contact tracing led by Barwon Health
 - Monitoring in collaboration with Colac Area Health and Barwon Health
 - Advice on isolation/quarantine and business closure in collaboration with DHHS, Barwon Health and Colac Area Health
 - Oversight of testing protocols
 - Infection prevention and control (aged care facilities, hotels, businesses)

Community supports



- Communications
- Results notifications
- Clinical escalation
- Social Support – Community Support Line
- Food
- Accommodation
- Compliance follow-up (ADF and DHHS)
- Follow-up testing

Key Learnings



- Knowledge of, and trust in, local health services is critical
- Rapid Response:
 - same day provision of on-site testing for industry outbreaks and laboratory capacity to achieve rapid turnaround times for results
 - Clinically led same-day contact tracing and testing
- Access to accommodation for isolation/quarantine
- Voluntary isolation of secondary contacts (third ring)
- Scalable testing sites, utilisation of drive through model
- Utilise established relationships with Community Leaders Group
- Businesses need to maintain up-to-date employee contact information
- Ability to address CALD community needs through interpreters and community leaders

