

EDUCATION AND CARE

ECU NEWSLETTER

11 March 2022

TOPICS THIS FORTNIGHT

Outbreak Response in ECECs

The ECU has received many enquiries on immediate responses services should take in an ECEC outbreak.

Page 9 of the [COVID-19 Case and Outbreak Management Guidelines](#) will provide services with understanding on the types of outbreaks and the immediate actions that should be taken.

The guidelines give detailed instructions on first responses regarding notification, isolation and testing requirements. Further directions may be given by Public Health on a case-by-case basis.

Is your service's quality rating clearly displayed?

Quality Area	Rating
Quality Area 1	Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 2	Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 3	Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 4	Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 5	Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 6	Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 7	Exceeding NQS
Overall Rating	Meeting NQS

Did you know that an approved provider must display the rating certificate issued by:

- the Regulatory Authority, or
- ACECQA (if ACECQA has given the service the highest rating level)?

Regulation 173(3) was amended in July 2021 to clarify this requirement.

Under section 172(d) of the [National Law](#), the approved provider must ensure the prescribed information about the rating of the service is clearly visible from the main entrance of the service premises.

This includes, under regulation [173\(1\)\(d\)](#) of the National Regulations:

- the service's current ratings against each quality area and
- the overall rating.

You can directly access and print a copy of your service's quality rating certificate via the NOA ITS portal.

Draft letters for services to parents/carers

Managing cases and outbreaks requires close participation from parents/carers as stakeholders.

The ECU has drafted template letters that services may use as a guide to facilitate communication of COVID-19 management processes.

Services are encouraged to use similar means to better engage parents/carers and inform them about testing and return-to-care procedures.

These letters are available on the ECU [website](#).

- Letter for parents/carers - [Isolated Case at ECEC](#)
- Letter for parents/carers - [Group/Room Outbreak](#)
- Letter for parents/carers - [3 or more Group/Room Outbreaks / ECEC Outbreak](#)
- Letter for parents/carers - [End of Group/ECEC Outbreak](#).

Out of scope services – case notification

Due to limited access to the NQAITS, licenced services under the *Child Care Act 2007* should notify the ECU of a positive case by sending an email to: ECU.COVID19@education.tas.gov.au and Jane Jepson jane.jepson@education.tas.gov.au.

Services should be familiar with our [FAQ on notifications](#) and the [Outbreak Management Guidelines](#) and respond promptly when a case is identified.

Hay fever symptoms

Hay fever shares common symptoms with COVID-19. Public Health has further advised that anyone with hay fever symptoms must stay home and get tested before returning to care.

Further information can be found in our FAQ – [What to do if your child experiences hay fever symptoms](#).

Supply of RATs

Friday, 11 March is the final day of deliveries of the government's supply of RATs to services.

Services are invited to return surplus RATs to the ECU for redistribution. Similarly, services that require additional RATs are advised to contact the ECU.

Services may contact Janelle Brennan on 6165 5435 for matters relating to the return or resupply of RATs.

Mask wearing requirements

The Premier announced easing of mask wearing requirements on 4th March. This announcement does not change existing mask wearing requirements in ECEC settings. Services are reminded that their business policies must not contravene Public Health Directions.

The [general mask wearing mandate](#) in public indoor spaces still applies to ECEC settings and the [mask wearing mandate in ECEC settings](#) for unvaccinated persons all remain in effect.

Where you can find more information:

The [ECU COVID-19 enquiry process](#) guides services on who to contact for COVID-19 related information.

Our [Resources for living with and managing COVID-19 in ECEC services - Education and Care](#) contains guidance and information on responding to COVID-19

related matters as we move towards living with COVID-19.

The [FAQs on ECU website](#) are frequently updated with the latest information.

Call the dedicated ECU COVID Advice team on 6165 5438 OR 6165 6508 (operating weekdays between 9:00 am – 5:00 pm)

Send an email to: ECU.COVID19@education.tas.gov.au

You will receive either a written response, or your Point of Contact Authorised Officer might call you.

On occasion, ECU will contact Public Health on your behalf to find out the information you need. This means there may be a delay in getting information to you.

Public Health:

- Phone 1800 671 738
- [Coronavirus website](#)

Australian Government

- [Australian Government, Department of Education, Skills and Employment](#)

NOTE:

We recommend contacting ECU directly where possible, and only using Public Health resources on the weekend or after hours.

The Education and Care Unit,
Department of Education

Contact details

Education and Care Unit
Department of Education
GPO Box 169

Hobart Tasmania 7001

Email: ecu.comment@education.tas.gov.au

