



COVID-19

INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR
CHURCH LEADERS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COVID-19

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new form of coronavirus. It was first reported in December 2019 in Wuhan City, China.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are fever, chills or sweats, dry cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and fatigue. Some people also experience headaches, nasal congestion, runny nose and loss of sense of smell or taste.

Most people infected with COVID-19 will experience only mild symptoms.

In severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or severe respiratory syndrome, requiring hospital care.

Initial reports have shown that the elderly and people with pre-existing medical conditions such as heart and lung diseases, are at most risk of severe illness and potentially those with diabetes, HIV and TB.



HOW IS COVID-19 SPREAD?



The virus can be spread from person-to-person through:

- close contact with someone who has the virus.
- contact with droplets expelled from an infected person when they cough or sneeze and inhaled by another person.
- touching objects or surfaces (like door knobs or tables) that have droplets from an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face.

Because COVID-19 is a new disease, there is no existing immunity in our community. This means COVID-19 could spread widely and quickly.

What is the treatment for COVID-19?

There is no specific treatment for COVID-19 in most cases symptoms will resolve on their own.

Is there a vaccine?

- Yes, there is now a vaccine available.

Why should people be tested for COVID-19?

- If we know who has the virus, that person can protect their family and community by isolating from others.

PREVENTION OF NEW INFECTIONS:

In order to limit the spread of COVID-19 there are a number of public health interventions:

1. The best way to prevent and slow down the spread of COVID-19 is to be well informed about the virus, and to know how it is spread and how to prevent transmission.
2. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze to prevent droplets spreading.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water or alcoholic based hand rub frequently, especially if you are touching surfaces that are touched by others.
4. Keep a safe distance (at least 1 metre) from other people, particularly when you are somewhere with a lot of other people.
5. Stay at home if you are feeling unwell.
6. Contact the COVID-19 Hotline on 1800200 if you have any symptoms.
7. Get vaccinated when the vaccines become available in PNG.



PROTECTING YOUR CONGREGATION

In addition to the routine measures to prevent new infections there are things you can do to protect your community:

- 1.** Make sure everyone over the age of 15 years is wearing a mask when attending any church function or activity.
- 2.** Limit the number of people attending a church service or activity so that you can adequately support social distancing (at least 1 meter between individuals).
- 3.** Ask members of the congregation to stay home if they are unwell.
- 4.** Avoid singing by the congregation as this activity can promote the spread of the virus even if masks are worn.
- 5.** During communion and at the end of the service manage the moment of people to avoid congestion and crowding.





COVID-19

It is important to remember that while COVID-19 can result in death, most people who are infected will develop a mild illness and recover. However, interruption of routine health services as a result of COVID-19 can have greater impact on your community. So it is important to ensure all routine health care services and practices continue but are provided in a way that limits risks to COVID-19, through careful planning, organised implementation and clear community leadership. In this way you can help keep everyone in your community safe and healthy.

COVID-19 can infect anyone, it does not discriminate and neither should we.

SHOULD I WEAR A FACE MASK?



Face masks are recommended for anyone who has known contact with someone who has COVID-19 or is suspected of having the virus.

People who are in close contact with lots of other people should wear a face mask as they will provide some protection.

People like health care workers and church leaders need to wear a face mask to protect themselves and their community. A person who wears a face mask is helping to protect themselves, their family and their community.



LOOKING AFTER YOUR COMMUNITY

If someone in your community contracts COVID-19 it is important that they stay at home and isolate to prevent the virus spreading to others.

The church community can play a vital role in supporting individuals and families to effectively isolate by:



Routinely checking that they are okay by phoning or by visiting while maintaining social distancing.



Checking that they have access to food, water and any other supplies they may need.

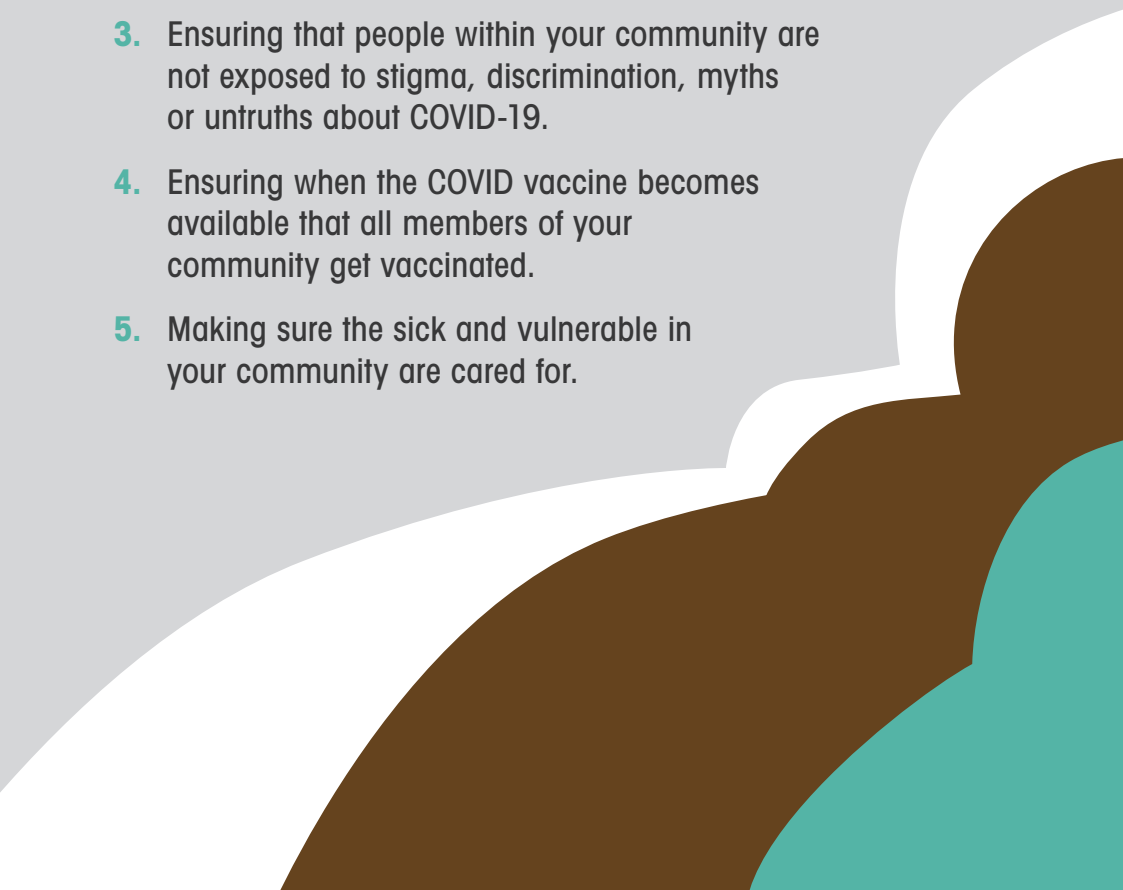


Informing others in the community

It is important that anyone diagnosed or has symptoms of COVID-19 self isolates for 14 days.

ROLE OF CHURCH LEADERS

Church leaders have an important role in the COVID-19 response through:

1. Providing your community with correct information about COVID-19.
 2. Helping your community understand how they can prevent the spread of COVID-19
 3. Ensuring that people within your community are not exposed to stigma, discrimination, myths or untruths about COVID-19.
 4. Ensuring when the COVID vaccine becomes available that all members of your community get vaccinated.
 5. Making sure the sick and vulnerable in your community are cared for.
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STAYING INFORMED ABOUT COVID-19



PNG online COVID-19 information portal
COVID19.info.gov.pg/



PNG NDOH Facebook page
www.facebook.com/PNGNDOH/



Department of Health COVID-19 website
www.health.gov.pg/subindex.php?news=1



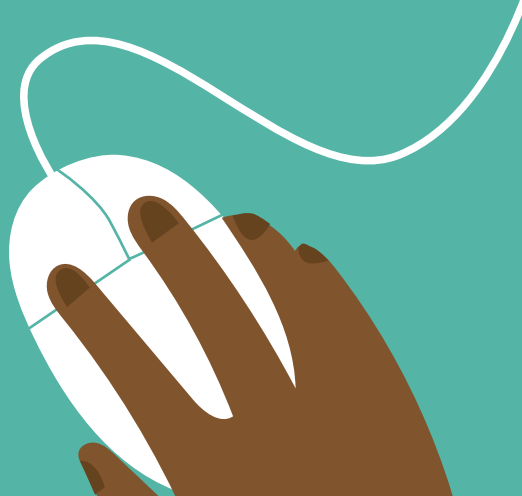
WHO Papua New Guinea Facebook page
www.facebook.com/WHOPapuaNewGuinea/



WHO's latest advice and updates
[www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/
novel-coronavirus-2019](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)



COVID-19 Hotline (NDoH)
1800200 or 71960813



COVID-19 VACCINES

Over the past 12 months, scientists around the world have worked together to develop a number of new vaccines to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and the severity of the illness.

When these vaccines are available in PNG it is important that everyone gets vaccinated.

Only when everyone is vaccinated can we prevent the spread of the illness.

