

Monday, 4 May 2020

Drive through COVID-19 clinic set up in Broken Hill

The Far West LHD will set up a drive-through COVID-19 fever clinic where patients can be screened and if warranted, tested for the virus, whilst sitting in their car.

This new initiative is in addition to the existing clinic on Thomas Street.

The COVID-19 drive-through clinic will be located in the Musicians Club car park in Crystal Street, indicated by the signs. The clinic opens on Wednesday, 6 May 2020 at 9am and will be operating Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm.

Any member of the public is welcomed to be screened for COVID-19 if they have been unwell and have any of the following common symptoms: Fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fatigue, aches and pains, headaches, runny nose.

The person will be screened by a FWLHD staff member following an assessment and it is then decided if the patient will be tested. All patients are given information about COVID-19, hand hygiene and about self-isolation. People who do not have any symptoms will not be tested.

If the patient requires testing, they will be swabbed by a staff member while they are seated in their car. The testing consists of a swab of the throat and also both of their nostrils. They will be told to self-isolate until they have received the results. Results are normally back within 3-5 days.

Where a patient receives a positive result, they will be contacted by the Public Health Unit (PHU). Where a patient returns a negative result they will be informed the test is negative via text message if they have consented to this.

Any community member is able to attend the clinic.

"We are encouraging everyone to use the drive through COVID-19 clinic if they believe they should be screened and tested. The Far West LHD is hopeful this will increase our local screening rates which will help in preventing the spread of the virus," said Mr Umit Agis, Chief Executive, Far West LHD.

He added Far West is leading the regional fight in terms of maintaining the lowest number of COVID-19 positive cases in the state.

Mr Agis said he was very grateful to the Musicians Club and its General Manager, Michael Boland, for making the club driveway available for the drive through clinic. He also thanked Broken Hill City Council for the loan of traffic control resources for the clinic.

"We very much appreciate the help from the Musicians Club and Broken Hill City Council and once more demonstrates the great community spirit that exists here, as we are all working to beat this pandemic."

Mr Agis said he was hopeful the convenience of a drive-through clinic will boost local screening numbers. "People should find it easy to use as they don't even have to get out of their car. They also don't have to be near other people which is helping to stop the spread of the virus," he said.

The drive through COVID-19 clinic is in addition to the current clinic operating at the Broken Hill Health Service (Thomas Street entry) seven days a week, 10am to 8pm.