



Image: PPE training for Interchangers.

A message from the CEO



As COVID-19 risks increase Interchange's CovidSafe Plan has been upgraded. We are an essential service and continue to deliver supports in line with WA government and NDIS Quality & Safeguards guidelines.

Our plan is to make sure all our services are risk assessed to ensure supports are safe for you, our staff and our respective families. This may mean that you see a different approach to the way your services are delivered. In some cases it may require changes to your supports. All changes will be discussed with you and our commitment is to work in partnership, following your personal Covid Management Plans.

Within this newsletter you will find what this means for your supports and our Interchange staff. You can also find how to use your NDIS funds to ensure safe practices are in place.

Sustainability and Review of NDIS Services and Charges

Recently we shared concerns with staff about our financial sustainability and we want to share this with you too. NDIS pricing is a challenge and combined with the impact of COVID-19 we know there will be an affect on our organisation. The NDIS provided a temporary increase of \$0.15 per hour to cover COVID-19 costs. This is inadequate and will result in a significant deficit

this year. We will however continue to put the safety of our people first and we are spending what is necessary on Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) and other controls.

We will have to review services against NDIS pricing and rules and other changes that are needed for our long term future. We will share more about our review over the coming months and what this will look like as we move forward jointly.

By working together we will all stay safe today and be stronger in the post COVID-19 world.

Justin O'Meara Smith
CEO Interchange



Supporting you through COVID



Keeping you COVID Safe – Impacts to your Supports

We are continuing supports to you safely and in line with all government guidelines. Our main priority is the safety of the people we support as well as our staff.

All our staff are vaccinated as per government mandate and will be wearing masks at all times when supporting you. Interchange are providing staff with the needed PPE to provide safe services and training for staff in high risk settings.

As we have increasing cases of COVID-19 in the community there may be changes to your supports. These may be:

- Asking you and others within your home to wear masks when indoors
- Asking whether anyone in the home is experiencing flu-like symptoms
- Reduced travel time in vehicles and public transport
- Finding alternative arrangements for shopping, collecting medication and attending appointments

- Changes to activities that are in a group setting
- Changes to your usual support staff due to isolation procedures

Your support team will discuss any changes to your activities with you, and together work out safe ways to provide you with the support you require.

Help us Help you

If you haven't already we want to encourage you to fill in this [Customer COVID-19 Survey](#) to better understand how we can support you through COVID-19 times, safely.

Get in touch with Interchange Schedulers!

Please let us know if you want to make changes to your supports due to COVID-19 or other plans you have by getting in touch with our Schedulers.

P: 9329 9399

E: hello@interchangewa.org.au



How you can Stay Safe



Using your Funding

You can now use your core funding for the following COVID-19 safety measures.

- As an NDIS participant with a reasonable need you can use your funds to purchase PPE
- If a Support Worker attending your home later tests positive to COVID-19, you will be able to access a one-off deep clean
- If your Support Worker normally helps you prepare meals at home or with grocery shopping, you can use these funds to pay for meal preparation and delivery support, for a limited time
- You can purchase Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) with your NDIS plan funding from the core budget

Find out more [HERE](#) and call the Schedulers or email hello@interchangewa.org.au if you would like help to arrange this.

Reducing the Risk

Social interactions online: You have the option to access virtual supports from Interchange if this suits your needs. Please call the Schedulers if you would like to find out more and book this in.

Online Shopping: Grocery stores such as [Coles](#) and [Woolworths](#) offer convenient online shopping which saves you a trip to the shops and reduces contact with potential exposure sites. You may also be able to request medication delivery and online doctor appointments with certain providers. Speak to your Support Worker if you need help setting things up.

Vaccination: Vaccines have been proven to be a safe and effective way to protect yourself and others from severe illness. Would you like to get your [COVID-19 vaccine](#) but need support? No problem, we can help! Talk to your Support Worker and they can assist you.

Risk of COVID-19 Infection

You have COVID-19 Symptoms

If you are feeling unwell and have COVID-19 symptoms, take a Rapid Antigen Test at home or get a PCR test. Find a testing clinic [HERE](#). If you require support doing so call the Schedulers. Make sure to isolate yourself until you have your test result and can take the relevant steps depending on its outcome.

You are a Close Contact

If you are deemed a [close contact](#) and have support services scheduled, please call the Schedulers and let them know. Schedulers will work with you in order to rearrange your supports to make them suit your needs. Follow the advice from the Health Department and get tested. You will likely be required to quarantine for 7 days from the last time you were exposed to the person with COVID-19. Get tested again at the end of your quarantine period as you must have a negative test result to leave this arrangement. After leaving quarantine, wear a mask in public places for the next 7 days, and do not visit high-risk settings. Find out more [HERE](#).

You Tested Positive for COVID-19

Your test came back positive – now what? No need for panic. Make sure you isolate yourself immediately and inform the people you were in contact with or who live with you, as they will have to isolate as well. If you took a RAT not a PCR, make sure to register it [HERE](#). Call the Schedulers if you have supports booked in with Interchange. We will be able to guide you through the process of either shifting your supports to happen remotely or on safe ways to continue personal supports to you in your home. Make sure to take it easy and look after yourself. Monitoring your symptoms is crucial to assure you seek medical help when necessary.

Getting Help

- In case of an emergency call 000 (triple zero)
- For advice on how to seek medical help or get tested for COVID-19 call the National Coronavirus Line on 1800 020 080
- For personal crisis and mental health support services you can contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1800 512 348 at any time

Your free RATs

As part of the WA free Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) program, a member of each household is now able to register for 5 RATs online and have the tests delivered to their home. Find out more on the [government website](#).

You can also access up to 10 free RATs over 3 months if you hold an eligible Commonwealth concession card. Find out more [HERE](#) and find your closest participating pharmacy [HERE](#).

Know someone fabulous?

Interchange is currently looking for new Support Workers and we would appreciate your help. If you know someone who wants to make a difference, has a great and caring personality, and would love to help people with disability live a good life - send them [this way!](#)



Achieving Individual Goals - Meet Greg



Image: (Top) Greg and friends making music together. (Bottom) Greg in his shed playing darts.

Greg has been with Interchange for 30 years and it has been an absolute pleasure to see his growth in all this time. In the past three decades Greg has been building a life for himself, a life he chooses, doing things he enjoys and bringing him closer to his goals.

Living independently has been one of Greg's top priorities when starting with Interchange. With the help of his support team, he got access to public housing, which he has now been in for quite some time. By collecting recyclables Greg has found a task he can do independently, helping to add a few dollars to his pocket money but also creating a sense of giving back to the community.

Something Greg is especially proud of is how his dream of building a shed has recently become a reality. A lot of hard work was put in but now his man cave is his own little paradise where he gets to work on projects that inspire him each and every day or hang out and play darts with friends.

Greg also invests time in learning how to cook and truly enjoys whipping up a meal now. He increased his social network by engaging with his neighbours and having regular catch-ups with them to make music and attend other social activities. We are excited to see what the future has in store for Greg.

What do you really think?

We strive to deliver the best support possible and want to make sure we get it right. So, what do you really think? We would like to know! The good, the bad and all the in between. With the help of your feedback, we can improve our services and create better supports to reinforce our main mission of supporting people with disability to live a good life.

YOU SPEAK.

WE LISTEN.

WE ACT.



Talk to our friendly staff.



Send us an [email](#).



Call us on 08 9329 9399



Complete our online [Feedback Form](#).