



# Caring for people with disability

## Clinicians – do you see me?

Remember, I am someone's son or daughter, parent, partner, work colleague or friend.

I matter... My life matters...

## People with disability are vulnerable

COVID-19 may present particular risks for people with disability because they may have:

- difficulty practicing hand hygiene
- physical barriers to accessing hygiene facilities
- difficulty performing social distancing because they may need assistance from others and may live in residential settings such as group homes
- the need to touch objects or others, or be touched by others to perform every day activities
- difficulty understanding information or managing change
- co-existing health conditions, and complex comorbidities.

## Ways you can help me – a checklist from a person with disability

### Communication

- Find out about how I communicate (e.g. whether I use signs, a book, or a device).
- Consider whether using pictures or objects may help me understand you better.
- Talk directly to me, not my supporter.
- Listen to me – make the time.
- Know what's normal for me.

### Information and decision-making

- Check whether I have understood when you give me information.
- Use Easy Read material where possible, this might help my support people too.

- Include me in decision-making, with support if I need it.
- Access MyHealthRecord to make sure you have all my information.
- Ask for information about me from the people who know me best.

### Support networks

- Acknowledge my supporters as a valuable resource.
- Identify whether my family and carers are a critical part of my support.
- Identify who else can provide support if needed.
- Identify a key contact person.
- Provide my key contact person with information and support about me as things change.

### Discharging me from hospital

- Ensure the supports I need are in place before you discharge me.
- Ensure I have a written plan and that my support people have a copy.
- Provide a handover to my GP and disability service provider.
- Ensure my supporters and I know what to do if I need emergency help.

### Further information

#### Department of Social Services

[dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/information-and-referrals-for-people-with-disability-and-their-supporters-about-coronavirus-covid-19](https://dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/information-and-referrals-for-people-with-disability-and-their-supporters-about-coronavirus-covid-19)

#### Department of Health – Health providers

[health.wa.gov.au/Coronavirus](https://health.wa.gov.au/Coronavirus)

#### Department of Health – General public

[healthywa.wa.gov.au](https://healthywa.wa.gov.au)

Produced by Health Networks © Department of Health 2020

Copyright to this material is vested in the State of Western Australia unless otherwise indicated. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced or re-used for any purposes whatsoever without written permission of the State of Western Australia.