



Australian Government

Department of Health

Guidance for PHNs for distribution of PPE to allied health professionals

On 19 April 2020, the Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, announced a one-off deployment of 500,000 surgical masks from the National Medical Stockpile for allied health professionals.

PHNs have discretion regarding to whom they distribute these masks. However, as this is a one-off allocation, the below guidance is offered by the Department of Health to assist in prioritisation.

PPE is a last line of defence in infection control and prevention. PPE does not replace the need for modifications to practise such as telehealth and physical distancing. This prioritisation list should be read in conjunction with the public document *Distribution of PPE through PHNs: Tranche 4*.

As a guide only, the Department has developed the list below, which considers (by allied health profession): the type of work being undertaken, including proximity to the patient and the potential for exposure to respiratory or oral secretions, as well as the possibility of changes to practise resulting in a reduced risk of exposure (for example, telehealth).

This list is not comprehensive and is designed as an example. This deployment of masks is intended for use only when services cannot be delayed for a symptomatic patient. In this instance, it is essential that the allied health professional use the masks provided in line with the advice for appropriate use of PPE, available at health.gov.au. If a practitioner is unwell they should not see patients.

HIGH PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY	LOW PRIORITY
Speech pathologists Respiratory physiotherapists Sonographers Diagnostic radiographers	Orthotists/prosthetists Other physiotherapists Podiatrists Occupational therapists Exercise physiologists Osteopaths Orthoptists Chiropractors Audiologists Optometrists	Arts therapists Dance therapists Music therapists Psychologists Dietitians Genetic counsellors Rehabilitation counsellors Social workers

Should PHNs require more specific advice in relation to requests for PPE from allied health professionals, they should contact their relevant jurisdiction's Health Department Chief Allied Health Officer.