

IWA Protocol for Covid-19 Containment Phase

IWA Volunteer Branches & IWA Sports Clubs

In December 2019, a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was first isolated from three patients with pneumonia, connected to the cluster of acute respiratory illness cases from Wuhan, China. Coronaviruses are mainly transmitted by large respiratory droplets and direct or indirect contact with infected secretions. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and good infection prevention and control precautions are effective at minimizing risk but can never eliminate it.



This document aims to explain Irish Wheelchair Associations (IWA) action plan in the current containment phase to support you.

What are IWA doing?

- **Covid-19 Response Team established to monitor the situation continuously- Led by Michael Doyle (National Director for Assisted Living Service).**
- **Actively communicating with HSE at local and National Level.**
- **Monitoring Public Health updates and acting accordingly.**

Main Facts to consider

- Not everyone will be infected by the virus.
- Many of those infected experience mild symptoms.
- Children are less likely to be affected.

- Older people and those with existing health conditions such as Diabetes, Heart Problems and Respiratory problems are the most vulnerable.
- Estimates for the mortality rate vary a little, but it is mostly thought to be 2% or less.
- The means of transmission has to be fully identified: contact with an infected person seems necessary.
- If you have a specific concern check the HSE Website for information on www.HSE.ie (WWW.HSE.IE) or www.HPSC.ie where there are regular updates relating to COVID-19 in Ireland.

IWA aims to support and protect its members, volunteers and staff during the containment phase of Covid-19. IWA aims to help prevent the further spread of the virus to family, friends and colleagues.

1. IWA continues operating services as directed by the HSE and IWA Management. These include ROC's (Day Services), Holiday Respite Services and Assisted Living Services which are delivered in controlled environments.
2. Community outings and day trips from ROC's (Day Services) to be cancelled.
3. Scheduled external events hosted in ROC's to be postponed.
4. Student/work placements to be postponed.

IWA is monitoring COVID-19 developments daily and is in daily contact with the HSE who advise on course of action to be taken for the safety and welfare of all. IWA members will be advised as appropriate of any changes to service provision.

All IWA Volunteer Branches and IWA Sport Club Activities are being suspended with immediate effect for the next two weeks (until Friday 27th March) when the Association will review the situation and contact your committee with an update. Its' important to note that unlike other IWA services, Volunteer Branches and IWA Sports Clubs operate in uncontrolled environments in the community and this raises the risk of infection for people who may have underlying conditions.

Supporting members

There is clearly a lot of uncertainty as to how the situation with COVID-19 will develop over the coming days and weeks but it is important that we take whatever preventative actions we can to protect our members and you as volunteers. We ask you for your full cooperation as we work together for the benefit and protection of our members.

Already it is evident that many people, and especially people who are considered as being vulnerable, are self-isolating as a precautionary step. They are staying at home as much as possible.



IWA Volunteer Branches and IWA Sports Clubs provide great support to members nationally throughout the year and in the midst of this situation you can continue to support members by keeping in regular contact by telephone and coordinating various supports as required and available in your local community.

Protect Yourself

It is important at all times to protect yourself from getting COVID-19 and to follow guidance from the HSE. Further information including frequently asked questions is available at www.hpse.ie at the following link:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/frequentlyaskedquestions/>

Contact:

If you have any individual queries or concerns regarding the Branch or Club activities, please feel free to contact either:

- Fiona Cunnane – IWA Volunteer Programme Manager at 087 055 6965
- Sam Jablansky, Community Sports Club Project Coordinator at 083 033 0728

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION