



KEY ASSETS - THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROVIDER

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE
PANDEMIC PLAN**



Our pledges to you



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

1. Set high **standards** for ourselves and the **care** and **support** we provide for you
2. Be on your side and **accept** you for who you are and what you want to be
3. Prioritise your **safety**, connections and build your **resilience**
4. Be **passionate**, **caring** and **respectful** in everything that we do
5. **Listen** to and **learn** from you so that we can do things better

CUSTOMERS, CARERS AND STAFF

1. Deliver **excellence** through **quality** service provision, **collaboration** and **measuring outcomes**
2. Act with **honesty** and **transparency**
3. Deliver **innovative** services in **cost effective** ways
4. **Challenge** the norm, ask questions and keep our promises
5. Conduct our business with financial **integrity** to achieve sustainability and **value**

COMMUNITIES

1. Build a **socially responsible** and **friendly** presence in each of our communities
2. Value **diversity** and **inclusion** and act with **cultural sensitivity** and **respect**
3. Be **creative** and **flexible** to respond to each community's unique **needs**
4. Recruit, train, support and retain the best **people** to deliver services
5. Contribute to **shared** learning through **research** and **partnerships**



We will achieve our purpose by *positively impacting* the lives of children, young people, their families and carers through quality services and expert advice designed to provide support, build confidence, improve skills, develop relationships, and strengthen resilience.

OUR CULTURE AND CORE VALUES:

- Key to what we do is our culture and our core values of:
- recognising **everybody counts** and is **accountable**
 - providing high **quality** and **safe** services
 - achieving **excellence** through **continuous improvement**
 - cultivating **knowledge, innovation** and **learning**

KEY ASSETS - THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROVIDER COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PANDEMIC PLAN

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to document Key Assets Australia response to the COVID 19 pandemic which will potentially disrupt our services and the lives of employees, carers and the people we serve. This plan demonstrates our preparedness and responsiveness with the focus on minimising risk and offering reassurance to staff, carers and service users, while maintaining operations to a high standard.

PLANNING KEY ASSETS AUSTRALIA (KAA) PANDEMIC RESPONSE WHAT IS A PANDEMIC?

A pandemic is the worldwide spread of an infectious disease. Pandemics are more likely if a virus is new, able to infect people easily and can spread from person to person in an efficient and sustained way.

Pandemics are generally expected to last for a few months and have significant impact on staff levels and on-going operations.

WHAT IS COVID-19?

A COVID-19 outbreak first occurred in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It is now spreading throughout the world. A coronavirus is a type of virus that is known to cause respiratory infections. Symptoms include fever, fatigue and a dry cough. The virus is spread from person to person through:

- Direct close contact with a person while they are infectious or in the period before their symptoms appear.
- Close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes.
- Touching objects or surfaces contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching the mouth or face.
- While most people who become infected will recover without needing any special treatment, people over the age of 60 and those with chronic diseases may be more severely affected.

KEY ASSETS AUSTRALIA ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Key Assets supports some of the most vulnerable people in our community and our services expand across Australia in isolated, remote and populated locations. Key Assets employs nearly 300 permanent and casual staff and provides fostering, disability and family support services in all states of Australia and in Norfolk Island. Our wide geographical spread increases the risk that Key Assets will be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

While any of our clients, carers and employees may be impacted by this pandemic, the organisation has representatives from all the following groups who are more vulnerable to primary or secondary impacts:

- People with underlying health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, high blood pressure.
- Young people with chronic health issues
- Older carers especially those with underlying health conditions.
- People with particular types of disabilities.
- People from CALD backgrounds who may not have access to information in their language
- Clients with behavioural issues who may put themselves at increased risk.
- People with mental health issues who may suffer increased anxiety or social isolation.
- Staff, clients and carers in rural, isolated or remote areas, which may not have access to health services.
- Aboriginal clients, especially in remote areas, where risk is heightened by overcrowding, poor health profiles, and lack of access to services.
- Clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who are socially isolated.

KEY ASSETS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In planning a response to the potential major disruption, we are guided by the following

- The safety and wellbeing of staff, carers, children, young people and all service users are the paramount considerations.
- We will maintain the high quality of our services throughout.
- It is essential that Key Assets maintains our reputation as a provider of quality services, flexible and responsive to customer need.
- Response to lockdown must be guided not only by the immediate situation but also on minimizing the impact on KA operations after the crisis has passed. It must remain a priority to position the business to pick up quickly after the crisis passes for the benefit of the people we serve.
- Leadership must remain positive, realistic, well informed, consistent, connected and visible.
- We follow the advice of government and health experts nationally and in each state and territory.

ORGANISATIONAL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In addition to the risk of clients and/or employees contracting an infectious disease, the COVID-19 pandemic presents multiple risks, including:

- Lack of continuity of service delivery to clients and carers.
- Placement breakdowns due to carer illness, or to financial and other stresses emanating from the impact of the virus.
- Shortages of critical supplies, including medical supplies, equipment, personal protective equipment (e.g. masks and gloves) and essential grocery items.
- The public health system becoming overwhelmed, which may present issues for clients and staff with high and/or complex medical needs.
- Staff shortages – due to illness, preventative quarantine, caring for others, school closures or anxiety – leading to workforce shortages/inability to provide services.
- Financial implications due to decreased service delivery, and possible increased reliance on agency staff.
- Increased difficulties in meeting regulatory and contractual obligations.

KEY ASSETS ASSUMPTIONS

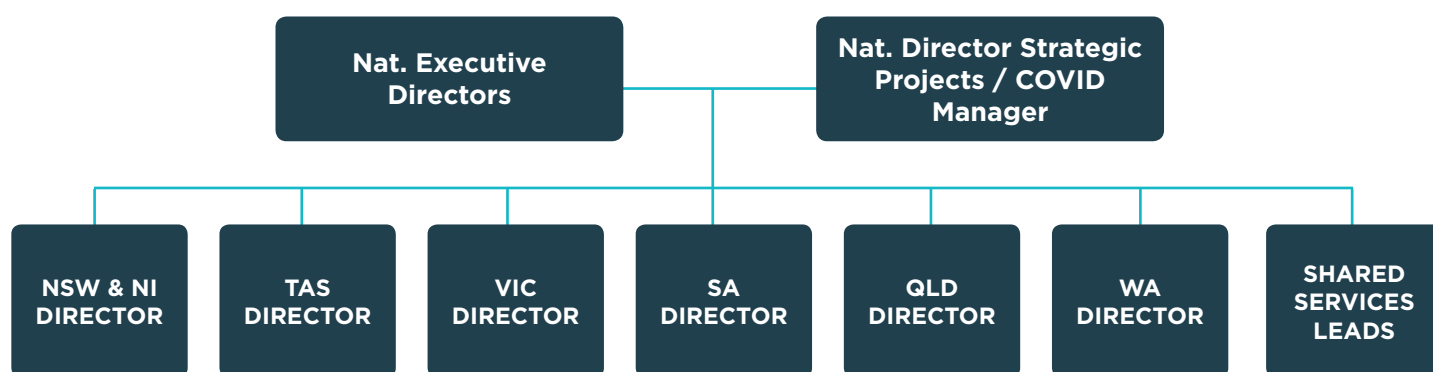
- The likely scale of the impact of COVID-19 requires a tactical adaptive approach to actively mitigate risks and position Key Assets to be able to adhere to the organisation's priorities.
- Key Assets is in a strong position financially, operationally, and structurally to be able to deal with this evolving situation.
- It is anticipated that Key Assets services across Australia will be impacted.
- Staff shortages will escalate during the height of the pandemic, due to illness, caring for others or quarantine / self-isolation.
- There may be a reduction in revenue due to the imposed inability to provide contracted services.
- There may be extra expenditure required due to remote working.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC EXECUTIVE TASK GROUP

Key Assets has established a COVID-19 Pandemic Executive Task Group (*Figure 1*) comprising the Key Assets Executive Directors, Executive Leadership Team and Shared Service Leads (Practice, Quality and Human Resources). The National Director Strategic Projects is designated COVID Response Manager for the duration and chairs the Task Group. See governance structure outlined below.

- The purpose of the group is to
- Monitor the impact of the pandemic on Key Assets staff, carers, service users, and on service delivery.
- Monitor and update the Readiness Strategy
- Make adjustments to this Plan and to the Readiness Strategy in response to changing circumstances.
- Decide on changes to policies and procedures as required.
- Make recommendations regarding budget adjustments and expenditure.
- Receive updates on state and territory situations.
- Share information.

Figure 1



KEY RESPONSE STRATEGIES

- Flexibility in response: This plan will be kept under continuous review and adjustments made in response to the changing situation.
- Shared decision-making and governance: Members of the COVID-19 Pandemic Executive Task Group share responsibility for decision making about Key Assets response to the COVID19 pandemic across all aspects of the organisation.
- Appropriate communication: Employees, Carers, children and all service users will be kept well informed. Communications will be targeted according to the needs of the audience. There will be accessible channels for employees, Carers, children and service users to request information, raise concerns, or ask questions.
- Adaptable and responsive service: Services will be maintained through the creative use of technology and other means. Staff working remotely are mandated to work flexibly to fulfil their work duties while accommodating family and domestic demands.
- Maintenance and support of current workforce: Key Assets will avoid layoffs and employment termination as long as is viable. Relevant managers will provide ongoing supervision and support on a group and individual level.
- Compliance with local requirements: Individual jurisdictions will develop their own COVID19 response strategies based on and consistent with this national plan and response strategy.
- Preparation for recovery while responding to the current crisis: the organisation will avoid any action that may jeopardise rapid return to normal operations when possible, and will be alert to opportunities the current crisis may present.