



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck
Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians
Minister for Youth and Sport

17 April 2020

Supporting Tasmanians and residents of the North-West Coast

The Federal Government continues to offer its support to residents across Tasmania’s North West Coast in the unprecedented fight to combat COVID-19.

Senator for Tasmania, the Hon. Richard Colbeck, today urged people, particularly senior Tasmanians, to ensure they were taking advantage of the vital links aimed at keeping them fit, healthy and connected.

“While the spread of COVID-19 is having an enormous impact on the North-West Coast, there are opportunities to draw together as a more responsive and connected community,” Senator Colbeck said.

“It is heartening to see the strengthened sense of community across the Coast as we pull together to support one another, especially senior Tasmanians, the vulnerable and isolated.

“This isn’t just a fight for personal wellbeing – we are taking a stand together and setting an example for the nation as we work toward protecting lives and defeating this virus.

“It’s an enormous responsibility but an achievable one.”

As Minister for Aged Care, Senator Colbeck said a string of Federal Government measures offered a safety net for Senior Australians, including those in aged care and the workers who care for them.

The services include:

- The My Aged Care contact centre 1800 200 422 - the main entry point for aged care information and services;
- Prioritised supermarket delivery services for residents registered for My Aged Care;
- Telehealth services ensuring residents can arrange appointments by phone or video. If

you require a prescription you can ask your doctor to forward it to your pharmacy so the medicines can be delivered to your door or you can ask if it is mailed to you. Telehealth services are available to all Australians with a Medicare card.

- A free Community Visitors Scheme to provide a link for the most vulnerable and isolated residents. Phone and online connection will be used until social distancing measures are lifted. Volunteers can register via My Aged Care.

Meals on Wheels and similar services have also be reinforced and prioritised with a \$59.3 million injection to ensure more prepared meals, food staples and essential daily items are delivered to those who need them most.

The Federal Government is also working with advocacy groups to provide welfare checks for senior Australians who had cancelled or deferred their home care packages during the crisis, Senator Colbeck said.

An additional \$70.2 million has been announced for Commonwealth Home Support Program providers in recognition of the extra support needed.

Senior Tasmanians in isolation or directly affected by COVID-19 can also access CHSP services for up to six weeks without an assessment.

“These support mechanisms established by the Federal Government are aimed at ensuring everybody receives the help they need,” Senator Colbeck said.

“It is critical senior Tasmanians stay connected and remain strong as we navigate this crisis together,” Senator Colbeck said.