

COVID-19 – SCIP UPDATE

23 March 2020



TO ALL PATIENTS

The situation with COVID-19 is changing rapidly and the Government has announced measures to help slow the spread of the disease;

<https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-system/>

We are currently at Level 3 on the government alert system and at midnight Wednesday will move to Level 4. This alert will be in place for **a minimum 4 weeks**.

As a Ministry of Health funded programme the SCIP is considered an **Essential Service** and so we continue to function.

Although we continue to operate, the availability of services will be limited at this time.

Limited Services

The following services are **cancelled**:

- Surgery
- Outpatient (Assessment, MAPping, Rehabilitation, Habilitation) appointments at both our Wellington and Christchurch clinics
- Visiting Audiology and Habilitation services
- Regional seminars

Spare Parts, Loan Devices, and Repairs

P 0800 500 405 or 03 355 3041 F 03 355 3045 E reception@scip.co.nz W www.scip.co.nz

Milford Chambers, St George's Hospital, 249 Papanui Road, Christchurch 8014

- These will continue to be available
- We aim to ensure as a bare minimum that all patients have access to the necessary equipment to allow them to remain hearing
- Spare parts, loan devices, and batteries will be provided by courier; please **do not visit** either our Christchurch or Wellington clinics at this time
- If you need spare parts, batteries, or have a problem with your processor, contact details are below

Remote Care Services

- In the event that patients have a problem that can't be resolved through replacement batteries, spare parts, or a replacement processor, we will endeavour to provide services remotely over the internet
- We will advise on a case-by-case basis if this option is suitable for you
- We may also use things such as Skype, Facetime, and other online chat services to answer any queries and provide care where possible

Keeping in touch with the SCIP

The situation is changing daily and we will post notices on our web-site (www.scip.co.nz) and Facebook page. We will also send updates via email if we have these available for people.

Small numbers of staff are rostered to take care of emergency needs, otherwise most staff will be working from home.

SCIP staff will be checking emails and phone messages once per day and actioning requests for emergency items by courier, once per day.

If you have any questions about how these changes may affect your cochlear implant care, these can be forwarded to our Christchurch office, through one of these channels;

Email: reception@scip.co.nz

Text: 027 355 3041

Web-site: scip.co.nz/contact

We apologize for any inconvenience caused by these changes.

Please appreciate we are trying to ensure the safety of staff, patients, and community at this uncertain time.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a type of coronavirus. There are now cases reported in many other countries, including New Zealand, which are being monitored closely by WHO.

- COVID-19 is spread from an infected person to others through:
 - the air by coughing and sneezing
 - close personal contact – such as touching or shaking hands
 - touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands
- Some groups of people are more at risk of serious illness, such as the elderly, those with compromised immune systems, and those with other health conditions. It is therefore important to minimise the spread of the virus in the community.

Where to get information

The Ministry of Health website is your best source of information because it is updated daily. The Ministry of Health also have a Facebook page: @minhealthnz and a Twitter channel @minhealthnz to alert people to key updates and messages specifically about COVID-19.

Free dedicated COVID-19 Healthline number 0800 358 5453

This Healthline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

People calling that line will be able to talk with a member of the National Telehealth Service. They have access to interpreters.

You should call this dedicated number for any COVID-19 health advice and information, any questions you have about COVID-19 or need information about self-isolation.