



6 April 2020

Re: COVID-19 update

Dear friends in Christ,

Yesterday, the Prime Minister made an important announcement regarding the early childhood sector. The [early childhood education and care package](#) will see the Government pay 50 per cent of the sector's fee revenue up to a point in time before parents started withdrawing their children in large numbers, but only so long as services remain open and do not charge families for care. Please note, if you are governed by UnitingCare Queensland and Wesley Mission, you must liaise with your respective parent organisation in relation to this funding.

Childcare centres

- The Early Childhood Education and Care Relief [package](#) has been announced
 - The payments will be paid in lieu of the Child Care (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy payments.
 - The government will pay 50 per cent of the sector's fee revenue up to the existing hourly rate cap based on a point in time before parents started withdrawing their children in large numbers.
 - The payments are expected to commence weekly from 6 April 2020.
 - For services to be eligible to receive this package, they must remain open; and must not charge families for care.
 - Access information about frequently asked [questions](#).
 - Services such as family day care, in home care, and outside school hours care have a different structure to centre-based care, and as such are impacted differently by the pandemic. Similarly, the government's recently announced relief package will possibly have a very different impact for these services.
- With respect to the [JobKeeper](#) wage subsidy announcement, we are still obtaining advice around what that means to the Synod. However, we encourage childcare centres who have an individual ABN to [register your interest online](#).
- The [Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme \(QKFS\)](#) is designed to assist services with the cost of implementing and delivering an approved kindergarten program. Each centre may apply for this funding scheme directly.
- We also encourage you to complete your BAS by the April deadline. This will mean you might be able to access [subsidies](#) such as those announced previously aimed at cash flow assistance.

Family daycare /in home care/outside school hours care services

With respect to family daycare, outside school hours care and in home care, the Synod is obtaining advice around what this announcement means for their ongoing funding arrangements. An update for this advice will be provided once available.

School and Early Childhood Exclusion Direction

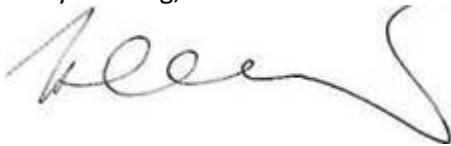
As a result of the recent changes in legislation, there are new [directives](#) that apply to services where a child is suspected to be unwell. Under this directive, if an educator suspects that a child is unwell, the educator is required to ensure that the child is removed from the service.

If members of your staff or the families of the children who you have in your care have been impacted as a result of COVID-19, they should refer to the [fact sheets developed](#) by the Federal Government in the first instance.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the COVID-19 pandemic situation is extremely serious and continues to change rapidly. I ask that you consistently seek information from the [Australian Government](#) and [Queensland Health](#) for up-to-date information and abide by all such recommendations. You can also refer to the [Synod coronavirus update website](#).

I anticipate providing the next update to you by Friday, 17 April 2020.

Every blessing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heather', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Rev Heather den Houting
General Secretary
Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod