

**21 May 2020**

## **Mind's support of clients during pandemic restrictions**

Mind would like to acknowledge the unstinting efforts of our staff in providing care and support to our clients during this health emergency.

We are proud of the work that has been done by hundreds of people across this organisation, who are working as one to ensure that our vulnerable clients remain connected and supported by Mind.

We thank the ABC for amending the online article that appeared on their website yesterday about the suspension of in-person support during the pandemic restrictions and its impact on vulnerable people with support needs.

The article now provides a fairer, fuller and more balanced representation of the challenges faced by vulnerable people with support needs, and the organisations that support them, as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions.

We are pleased it now includes some acknowledgement of the incredible commitment and effort our staff have been making every single day to keep that connection and support in place for our clients. Their work in keeping clients supported while protecting them from infection has been extraordinary in these most challenging circumstances.

We think it is worth clarifying the statement in the article and 7.30 Report story that Mind is under investigation. To be precise, the Quality and Safeguards Commission is investigating a specific complaint made by a client about our temporary suspension of in-person support to service delivery through telehealth. It is a small but important distinction and we have welcomed and cooperated fully with the investigation of that complaint.

Mind has an obligation to take measures to minimise infection transmission to protect its clients and we are proud that we responded in a timely and considered fashion as the pandemic reached Australia.

Despite our concerted efforts, Mind did not have access to PPE at the time of this complaint, which might have provided us with options to continue in-person support. To have run the risk of transmission would clearly have been unacceptable. Like other NGOs we have borne the cost of supplying PPE ourselves.

As government health agencies begin to cautiously relax restrictions we are monitoring the situation closely and will continue to follow their advice and direction. The health, safety and wellbeing of our clients and staff is paramount.

*For more information please contact Mind Communications Manager Max McLean at [max.mclean@mindaustralia.org.au](mailto:max.mclean@mindaustralia.org.au) or on 0497 333 545.*