



Bulletin 16 March 2020

## **COVID19 - WH&S Reporting and Preparedness**

Members will be aware of the work being done by QLD Health and QAS in regard to preparedness for ensuring the workplace health and safety of staff in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak. This work includes planning to bolster the system to manage what has been modelled to be ahead of us.

United Workers Union representatives have been regularly briefed on the situation as it changes and provided with a number of possible scenarios that may unfold depending on how the virus develops over the next weeks and months.

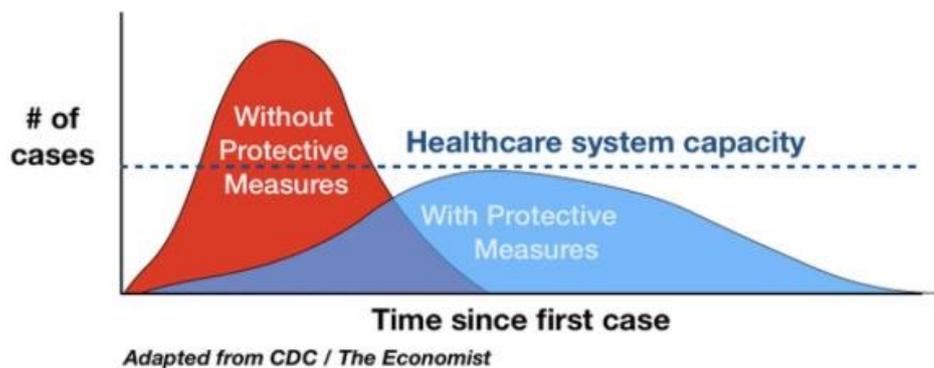
At the forefront of our representations has been the workplace health and safety of our members and the protection of entitlements in the case of staff having to self isolate or be quarantined. There is a whole of government position being formed and United Workers is advocating for particular measures to be put in place for members working inside the healthcare system regarding entitlements.

As issues have been raised at a local level about interactions with HHSs and individual facility arrangements for dealing with triage of suspected infectious patients, or other access and waste disposal issues, United Workers union representatives have been escalating and working towards solutions.

Your representatives have been mindful not to further exacerbate an already

highly charged situation while working towards these solutions for members.

The information that has been shared with us by QLD Health and QAS is very clear about the fact that it is vitally important to suppress the person-to-person contact transmission of the virus for as long as possible to ensure a staged as possible impact on our health services across the state. The longer we are in the containment phase of COVID-19 the better the community outcomes will be over the long term - as illustrated by the graphic below.



Mitigation efforts like social distancing help reduce the disease caseload on any given date, and can keep the healthcare system from becoming overwhelmed.

Drew Harris

All indications tell us that COVID-19 will impact on resources for 6-9 months. During this period, if members feel like their personal health and safety has been compromised, like at any other time, they should use existing reporting mechanisms to document with management for resolution.

Members should continue to be vigilant about their own health and safety while supporting the vulnerable in our community. It's important the carers in our

society look after themselves.