

16 April 2020

THE LAST WORD

If Australia continues to have success in flattening the COVID-19 curve then we will never reach the point where our hospitals are forced to refuse service to sick individuals. Everyone is working for a 2020 in which ICU beds and ventilators remain available in some capacity for everyone who really needs them.

That is what we are working for, but we must be prepared for other outcomes. As CEO of Cystic Fibrosis Australia, I have made it my chief concern in the last few weeks to keep my finger on the pulse of the CF/COVID co-morbidity problem.

We have had a lot of feedback from our experts to the effect that COVID-19 is extremely survivable for individuals with CF. The results both in Australia and internationally have been encouraging.

So far we have braved two months of the crisis without recording a single CF COVID death in Australia. We need to keep it that way. The next stage of preparedness for Australians with CF is to make sure that they are visible to the health community and that doctors have the most updated knowledge of CF as a condition and the great strides of recent times.

They need to know about the steady increase in life expectancies.

They need to know about the increasing freedom from symptoms and restrictions that modern medicine has afforded us.

They need to know that individuals with CF and COVID-19 are vulnerable but also eminently recoverable - this will ensure that tough decisions in the ICU do not go against us.

This April CFA will be printing and distributing the first ever CF identification cards in Australia. Other countries have adopted this approach. It is the simplest, most effective way to make sure that your vital information goes wherever you do and that relevant experts can be contacted if you find yourself hospitalised unexpectedly.

With hospital systems under strain we need to give our people and also our healthcare workers every possible foothold. The right information when and where it's needed.

I urge you to click through the link so that you can examine our free CF ID Card and fill out your details. There are 2 options:

1. A CF ID card to store on your computer or phone - [CF ID Card Large](#).
2. Alternatively a small wallet sized ID card can be filled in and forwarded to nickim@cfa.org.au who can send it back to you laminated - [CF ID Card Small](#).

This card will mean that no matter what happens in the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, we can always have the last word on CF.

Kind regards



Nettie Burke, CEO
Cystic Fibrosis Australia