

1 September 2021

Minister for Health, the Hon Martin Foley MP
Ministerial Office
Level 22/50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Minister Foley,

Allied health professionals, which include regulated professions such as chiropractors and self-regulating professions, provide important health services for people living in the community.

The ACA continues to support Government public health directives to ensure these community goals are achieved. We also do this by working with Department of Health Victoria and Allied Health Professions Australia to ensure our members can continue to provide care and do so in accordance with the changing directives.

The profession is understanding of the demands on the healthcare system and workforce given the number of people requiring healthcare support, including intensive care and ventilatory support.

The profession is also cognisant of the issues faced with lockdown from a mental health and business impact perspective.

Health services including allied health, continue to operate and provide valued care yet remain vigilant to protect patients and the broader public including staff.

The ACA is seeking a variation to the Urgent Care definition that enables Allied health practitioners to provide continuity of care to patients. This would ensure there is informed consideration as to the priority, likelihood and consequence of deterioration to the patient's condition if treatment is delayed. The ACA is of the opinion that care should not be delayed when it will result in the deterioration of the person's health.

The ACA would therefore request consideration that enables greater clinician judgement, in accordance with operative regulatory Codes of Conduct, to be used in determining access to care. This would enable broader access in keeping with public health goals and diminish downstream health system burden and support care needs.

The ACA continues to commit to:

- Assist public health officials by encouraging and supporting patients and the people in our communities in their understanding of directives;
- Continuing to contact patients before presenting to ensure they do not attend if they have any COVID-19 symptoms or have been identified as a close or casual contact, and to wear a mask when attending;
- Provide face to face services for patients whose health is likely to deteriorate if they don't receive their usual care. The ACA notes that most other jurisdiction have adopted a relatively uniform approach that focusses on clinician informed judgement; and
- Ensure all staff use other appropriate measures to minimise and mitigate risk during consultations.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Anthony Coxon
ACA President