

18 March 2020

For the last 25 years, Micah Projects has maintained an unwavering commitment to the health and wellbeing of all our staff, community members and program participants. Today, with the ongoing concerns of coronavirus (COVID-19), we continue to use the utmost vigilance to ensure services remain accessible to our most vulnerable and at-risk populations and our staff are supported in doing this work. All staff have the necessary support, equipment and directions for ensuring their own health and wellbeing and infectious disease protocols, whether on the street, in homes, in vehicles, in our offices or in the community.

Micah Projects is a 24/7 organisation. To ensure our program participants who have experienced significant trauma receive the safety and support needed, we cannot close our doors or scale down our services while we deal with this pandemic and we need help from our community at this time.

We are taking extra precaution to closely monitor the status of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and its impact on our community. As a vested community member, we know you are concerned about the health and safety of Brisbane locals, and want to know how this impacts our work.

General overview of our services continuing

Homelessness

All homelessness teams, including our nursing staff, are working business as usual. This includes Street to Home, Home for Good Hub, Family Support and Advocacy Team and Supportive Housing at Brisbane Common Ground.

We are continuing our work with both Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and Princess Alexandra Hospital with agreed upon referrals.

Our priorities in supporting people are health and wellbeing in the home, information about the current COVID-19, and reducing isolation where possible given that we have a high proportion of very vulnerable people.

Domestic and Family Violence

Our Brisbane Domestic Violence Service (BDVS) is operating as usual and continues to provide support with phone, appointments and outreach services. Due to recent events, we continue to experience high demand, including the number of women in hotels who have recently escaped domestic violence.

Young Mothers for Young Women

Young Mothers for Young Women in Caboolture and Brisbane are providing more individualised support to participants, given that we are adapting the service and not having groups as per health recommendations.

Hawthorne Children and Families' Hub

Group centre based occasional childcare is temporarily ceasing, but staff are providing one to one family support both at the centre and in the community. Further notice will be given in relation to centre based care, based on staffing availability and health advice.

Breaking Social Isolation – Building Community

Our hope is to create justice and respond to injustice at the personal, social and structural levels in society.

We seek to work collaboratively and respectfully with Indigenous communities and agencies. Micah Projects endorses the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Micah Projects Limited is a company limited by guarantee.

Lotus Place and Support Services

Lotus Place in Brisbane, Townsville and Rockhampton are temporarily ceasing group activities and realigning work to provide support to people by phone, outreach and appointment.

Support for people making applications to the National Redress Scheme will continue. Counselling and support for individuals affected by the Disability Royal Commission will also continue to occur.

Inclusive Health

The Inclusive Health and Wellness Hub is open. Dental services are not available for two weeks as per the directive from Queensland Health. The Wellness Program, as this occurs mainly in groups, is not available until further notice - <https://inclusivehealth.org.au/>

Here are a few steps we are currently taking to protect our community:

- With this rapidly evolving situation, our teams are responding to changes and adopting new preventative procedures for infectious disease control to keep our program participants, volunteers and staff safe. We are proactively implementing additional sanitisation precautions and revising emergency procedures and plans.
- We are taking extra precautions and following expert guidelines from Queensland Health and the Australian Government. We are continuing to coordinate services and programs to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, align response efforts and ensure our staff and residents are fully educated and implementing best health and preventative practices.
- To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and minimise risk to the broader community, we have cancelled and postponed upcoming community events until further notice. Please follow our social media accounts as we continue to create opportunities for social connection and share information via these channels: www.facebook.com/micahprojects and @micahprojects on twitter.

Here's how you can help support vulnerable, at-risk communities during this crisis:


- **Contribute cleaning and personal hygiene supplies.** Due to a national shortage, we are in critical need of pocket sized tissues, small bottles of hand sanitisers and small water bottles to mitigate risk for people sleeping rough. We are in need of disinfecting wipes, hand sanitiser, bleach, masks, gloves and toilet paper.
- **Make a contribution to support our emergency response efforts.** You can make a direct donation to www.micahprojects.org.au/donate or create a fundraising page to rally the support of your friends and family.
- **Stay informed** – To keep up to date with all the latest information please check out [Australian Government Health Resources](#) and [Queensland Health Alerts](#) for local updates and learn more about COVID-19 from the [World Health Organization](#). You can also get further information from the Coronavirus Health Information line on 1800 020 080.

We thank you for your continued support; for your patience as we protect our network of supporters and postpone our community events; and for your unwavering dedication to providing safe homes, supporting women and children experiencing domestic violence and support for our vulnerable populations, especially in time of crisis.

The only change to service delivery that we are making is that we have ceased our groups, and are repurposing that time to support people on an individual basis.

All staff are committed to supporting both the participants in our services and the community where needs arise during this time of crisis.

Thanks



Karyn

MICAH PROJECTS



Breaking Social Isolation
Building Community