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New COVID-19 self-care guide - an essential pre-planner for people with chronic conditions

Sydney, 24 January, 2022. With escalating numbers of the Omicron virus, and Delta variant still in the community in Australia, Global Healthy Living Foundation Australia (GHLF Australia) has compiled an essential guide to managing in the current outbreak of COVID-19 with all the best advice, latest information and resources specifically for people with chronic conditions and the immunocompromised community.

People with chronic conditions are busy people managing their health and safety, as we all should be now. Planning for their conditions is a daily prerequisite for optimal health. That's why the [COVID-19 Self Care Guide](#) brings together information from a range of government and other reliable healthcare sources, plus practical tips from people with chronic conditions who have had COVID-19, to help patients to plan, assess symptoms and manage in the event of infection. The guide is easy to navigate and filled with information in three sections; create your action plan, assessing your symptoms and managing chronic conditions. It covers a range of concerns that include how to access help, government resources, healthcare and other key tips for planning ahead and managing your condition and your household if needed.

Seth Ginsberg is the co-founder of Global Healthy Living Foundation and says that the chronic condition community are often left out of general advice because their health management is specialised. "Most Australians with existing health conditions have spent the last two years carefully managing their lives, their families and loved one to avoid COVID-19 infection, including getting vaccinated as soon as possible with a third primary COVID-19 vaccine dose. Some may soon be dealing with COVID-19, meaning it's more critical than ever to plan, not just to stay well or cope if personally infected, but to prepare in the event of an infection in the household. That's why this guide is so comprehensive and a must-read to share with others in your household."

COVID-19 self-care guide a go-to resource for the chronic disease community

The [COVID-19 Self Care Guide](#) is the latest resource from GHLF Australia, following on their success providing education on vaccination and patient-centred issues for the whole community. In October 2021, GHLF Australia launched its new [website](#) with the [MatterofVax podcast](#), [vaccination education videos](#) and [patient stories](#) of vaccination journeys that validate how complex management of health is for people with chronic conditions during a pandemic.

Ginsberg believes there is a role for all of us to help answer patient questions and build confidence. “In 2020, GHLF launched COVID-19 Support Program worldwide and, in 2021, a Vaccination Support Program was launched by GHLF Australia to help us all understand the environment in which we live and importance of vaccination. It is helping to build support in the community and connect us during periods of isolation that we still need today due to the Omicron outbreak.”

The COVID-19 program now serves more than 30,000 people in the US, Australia and other countries. MatterofVax is reaching 100,000 Australians with plans for more resources in the pipeline for 2022.

“It’s no surprise to us, after two years of research among patient communities, to learn that people with chronic conditions are still struggling to connect with the community, get the medication they need and understand how vaccinations and treatments will affect them. Three variants of concern later, we still have the same problems,” he added.

“All of our resources and programming are unique. It’s brought together by patients for patients, collating the best available resources that we know will help make a difference,” said Ginsberg. “We learned a lot from early engagement with the Australian chronic illness community. Our guides ask for feedback and we’re hoping we will hear more about what patients need for more resources like this in future.”

In the latest MatterofVax podcast, *Let’s talk: Long Covid, flu and what’s next*, host Steph O’Connell talks with Assoc Professor Anthony Byrne a Thoracic Physician at St Vincent’s hospital and research at University of New South Wales (UNSW). Dr Byrne has spent the last two years treating COVID-19 and is becoming an expert in long-COVID. The episode is perfectly timed for the release of the COVID 19 self-care guide especially for those trying to plan for this year.

COVID-19 Self Care Guide Disclaimer: This information should never replace the information and advice from your treating doctors. It is meant to inform the discussion that you have with healthcare professionals, as well as others who play a role in your care and well-being.

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ABOUT GHLF PTY LTD (ABN 82 609 039 134) – Established in 2014 and incorporated in 2016, GHLF PTY LTD trading as GHLF Australia, is the parent non-profit of CreakyJoints Australia, the vibrant online patient community for autoimmune and inflammatory arthritis patients and their families throughout Australia. Drawing on nearly two decades of foundational knowledge, successes, and reputation of CreakyJoints.org, which is headquartered in the United States and co-founded in 1999 by arthritis patient Seth Ginsberg and social entrepreneur Louis Tharp, GHLF PTY LTD aims to develop content to mobilise and engage the Australia patient and caregiver community around improved access-to-care, and better health outcomes.

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