

First dedicated Gold Coast COVID-19 testing clinic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People opens at Nerang

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The Gold Coast's first and only dedicated COVID-19 testing clinic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people opened today at Nerang.

The Kalwun COVID-19 Respiratory Clinic is a partnership between the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) and Kalwun Development Corporation. It has been funded by the Australian Government's \$2.4 billion COVID-19 response package and supported locally through Gold Coast Primary Health Network.

As well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents, the stand-alone clinic can also test those aged over 70, pregnant women, children under 12 months old and those who are immunocompromised or living with chronic disease.

Kalwun Development Corporation CEO Kieran Chilcott said that the clinic will help keep the entire Gold Coast community safe from COVID-19,

"By opening this dedicated testing clinic here at Nerang we are providing a safe environment for our community if they have a cough, fever, shortness of breath or sore throat – as well as making sure if people have those symptoms they are attending a specifically designed testing clinic instead of turning up at other health services across the coast."

"This clinic has been designed to ensure safety for everyone including having a concierge greeting service, leaving enough time between bookings for thorough cleaning, using personal protective equipment and having patients flow in one door, safely through the clinic for their appointment and out another door.

"This means that even if your sniffle turns out to be just a sniffle - and we hope that's all it is for everyone coming here - when you attend the Nerang respiratory clinic you are in a really safe environment and we can look after you really well here," Mr Chilcott said.

IUIH CEO Adrian Carson said that the clinic opening provides certainty of access for the entire Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of South East Queensland.

"The Nerang COVID-19 respiratory clinic is the fourth dedicated testing clinic to open across the IUIH network in the past month – and today's opening means that the estimated more than 100,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in South East Queensland now have access to a network of dedicated testing clinics run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

"We're really encouraging all of the community with symptoms to call their nearest community controlled COVID-19 testing clinic – whether that's here at Nerang or up at Logan, Booval or Caboolture.

"If you've got symptoms and you get tested, not only will you have peace of mind to protect your family and your community, but at a broader level, we'll have the information we need to make sure our communities stay safe and can access the care they need if they do get sick."

Gold Coast Primary Health Network Board Chair, Dr Roger Halliwell, said testing all sectors of the community, no matter how mild the respiratory symptom, was the key to helping control the spread of COVID-19.

“Testing helps us monitor and keep track of COVID-19 in the community, and early detection is the key to reducing its spread, which is why it’s so important we have a range of options for local residents to be tested,” Dr Halliwell said.

Member for Moncrieff, Angie Bell said that the dedicated clinic is part of a national response designed to reduce pressure on hospital emergency departments and other general practices.

“The Kalwun service is in addition to another three respiratory clinics that will service the Gold Coast region to relieve the pressure on testing facilities at the Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina,” Ms Bell said.

“I want to encourage all Gold Coasters, especially those who have symptoms such as a cold, sore throat or a cough, to make sure they get tested for COVID-19.”

About the Kalwun COVID-19 Respiratory Clinic

The Kalwun COVID-19 Respiratory Clinic is located at 14 Nerang Street, Nerang

It is open from 8:30am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

Testing is available for anyone with symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath or sore throat who are:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or immediate family of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- aged over 70 or under 12 months
- pregnant
- immunocompromised (e.g. organ recipients)
- living with a chronic disease.

Bookings can be made by calling: 0455 026 553

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