Lifebridge advice – update on masks 2/8/2020

The NSW Government is strongly encouraging greater use of masks in high-risk public settings to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The advice from the NSW Chief Health Officer Dr Kerry Chant specifically recommends the use of face masks in indoor settings where physical distancing is hard to maintain, such as on public transport or in supermarkets.

Lifebridge mandates the use of masks where a support worker is unable to maintain the recommended social distancing requirement of 1.5m. This may include but is not limited to: transporting customers, assisting on and off buses, attending to personal care needs and when serving and supervising a meal.

<u>A face mask is not a substitute for other precautions.</u>

Using a mask may provide a false sense of security. The use of a mask and only a mask will not prevent infection.

The best ways to protect yourself and others against COVID-19 remain:

- practicing social distancing
- washing your hands with soap or sanitiser for a minimum of 20 seconds
- coughing or sneezing into your elbow or tissue
- staying home when sick
- Advise your manager immediately if you are sick or unwell.

Put on your mask safely

1. Before putting on your mask, wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Or use hand sanitiser that is made up of over 60% alcohol.
2. Ensure you are using a new surgical mask or clean cloth mask. Do not reuse surgical masks. Always use a clean and dry cloth mask.
3. Check the mask for defects, such as tears or broken loops.
4. If you are wearing a surgical mask, position the coloured side of the mask outward.
5. If the mask has:
   - Ear loops: Hold the mask by both ear loops and place one loop over each ear.
   - Ties: Hold the mask by the upper strings. Tie the upper strings in a secure bow near the crown of your head. Tie the bottom strings securely in a bow near the nape of your neck.
   - Dual elastic bands: Pull the bottom band over your head and position it against the nape of your neck. Pull the top band over your head and position it against the crown of your head.
   - A metallic strip or wire: firmly adjust the bendable metallic upper strip to the shape of your nose by pinching and pressing down on it with your fingers.
6. Pull the bottom of the mask over your mouth and chin. Be sure your mask fits snugly.

Wear your mask safely

- One mask will be worn when working in a group for a day,
- A new mask will be worn for individual customers where 1.5 social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Carry clean masks in a clean zip-lock bag with you
- Don't touch the mask while you are wearing it. If you do touch it, wash or sanitise your hands
- If your mask gets soiled or damp, replace it with a new one

Remove your mask safely

1. When removing your mask, avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth at all times.
2. Remove your mask outside and away from other people, if possible.
3. Carefully remove your mask by grasping the ear loops or untying the ties. For masks with a pair of ties, unfasten the bottom one first, then the top one.
4. Dispose of single-use masks responsibly in the rubbish bin. For safety, put it into a sealed bag before putting it in the bin to ensure others won't touch it.
5. Wash and dry reusable cloth masks after each use
   - Store in a plastic or zip-lock bag until you have an opportunity to wash them.
   - Wash cloth masks in the washing machine with other clothes or by hand using soap.
   - Lay out flat to dry (in the sun if possible) or put in the dryer.
   - Store in a clean, dry place.
6. After removing your mask, always wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol.