



Ramsay Health Care's

# COVID-19 Pandemic Response

in Australia

People caring for people.



# A connected health care network

Ramsay Health Care was established in 1964 and has grown to become a leading global health care company, delivering a range of acute and primary health care services. Ramsay operates facilities in 519 locations across 11 countries, making it one of the largest and most diverse private health care companies in the world.

Ramsay is Australia's largest private hospital operator, with more than 70 hospitals, day surgeries and clinics. Ramsay's Australian business admits more than 1 million patients per year, employs more than 30,000 people and has a network of approximately 16,000 medical specialists.

In addition to its comprehensive range of private hospitals, Ramsay also operates three public facilities in Australia, and has established a community pharmacy brand which operates in-house pharmacy departments and dispensaries, as well as a retail franchise operation which supports 59 community franchise pharmacies.

Ramsay leads the way in developing the role of private health care in Australia's balanced health care system. It knows the importance of teaching and research and places an emphasis on both undergraduate and postgraduate training of the future medical and nursing workforce.

## Centralised COVID-19 response

At the end of March 2020, the Australian Government made a landmark decision to enlist the support of the private hospital sector to ensure the nation's health care system had capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Commonwealth requested private hospitals to provide assistance by temporarily integrating into the country's public health care systems. This required private hospitals to make infrastructure, essential equipment, supplies, workforce and additional resources available to the state and territory hospital system or the Australian Government.

Ramsay subsequently entered into partnership agreements with governments in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia, maintaining full capacity while also making its facilities and resources available to the public health system.

While honouring our commitment to maintain our workforce and provide assistance throughout the COVID-19 crisis, Ramsay also offered upskilling and training opportunities to staff to ensure operational readiness.

Ramsay established two dedicated teams to manage the pandemic declared by the World Health Organisation: the Covid-19 Response Team and Executive Covid-19 Response Team. These teams focused on four primary risks: personal protective equipment, organisational readiness, workforce, and resilience.

Throughout the pandemic, more than 250 guidelines, policies, risk assessments, tools and checklists were written, reviewed, approved, released and implemented across Ramsay's Australian business. All staff and hospitals had 24/7 access to two executive co-leaders with strong backgrounds in clinical governance and risk management in both the public and private settings. We also engaged with our hospitals in France, Italy, the UK and the Nordics to share and adopt best practice.

Hospital executives received policy updates, new policies and guidance multiple times a week. In addition, the CEO of Ramsay Australia provided communication to all staff and medical specialists at least once a week. Facility CEOs regularly communicated to their medical advisory committees, specialist networks and staff.

The Executive COVID-19 Response Team held frequent teleconferences with medical advisory committee chairs, and facility executives. Information for patients and visitors was constantly reviewed, created and updated on Ramsay's websites, social media platforms and through GP email communications.





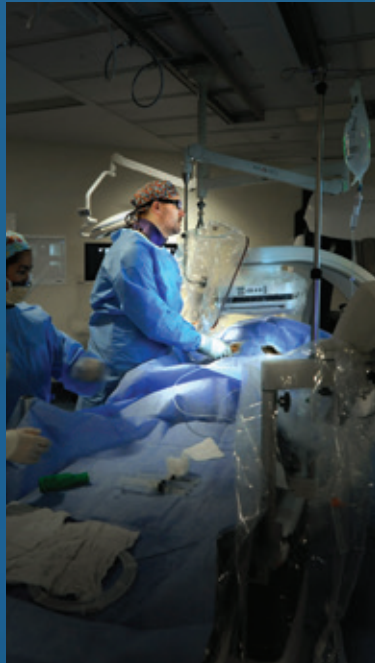


# Ramsay's achievements during the COVID-19 pandemic

Ramsay has been proud to play an active role in Australia's COVID-19 health response:

Added more than  
**30,000**

Ramsay staff and  
**9,000**  
hospital beds to  
Australia's public health  
system to assist in the  
fight against COVID-19,  
while ensuring no Ramsay  
staff were stood down  
due to the pandemic.



Almost  
**87,000**  
public patients were  
admitted to  
Ramsay hospitals  
across Australia from  
February to September 2020.

More than  
**28,000**  
procedures across a  
range of specialties  
were performed on these  
public patients.

Ramsay facilities also  
accepted emergency patients,  
mental health patients and  
rehabilitation patients from  
the public system.\*

\*Data includes the public hospitals  
which Ramsay operates

**12**  
of Ramsay's Melbourne  
hospitals and clinics assisted  
the Victorian Government's  
pandemic response by:

Redeploying Ramsay  
staff to work more than

**1,500**  
shifts in  
**8**

residential aged care  
facilities to assist with  
COVID-19 outbreaks.

Admitting about  
**1,500**  
public patients (surgical  
and non-surgical) to  
Ramsay facilities to ensure  
Victorians received the  
treatments they needed.

Caring for  
**85**  
vulnerable aged care  
residents and supporting  
residential services residents  
during a distressing time for  
them and their loved ones.

Admitting  
**72**  
COVID-positive patients  
(mostly aged care residents)  
to Warringal Private Hospital,  
Glenferrie Private Hospital,  
and Peninsula Private  
Hospital, while ensuring safety  
remained our top priority for  
staff, doctors and patients.



Joondalup Health Campus,  
located in Western  
Australia, treated more than

**40**  
COVID-positive patients  
without any staff  
transmission. This included

**30**  
COVID-positive  
patients from cruise ship,  
the Artania.

Ramsay Pharmacy  
administered almost  
**17,000**  
flu vaccinations through  
its pharmacies – an  
increase of almost  
**400%**  
compared to 2019.



# Ramsay's achievements during the COVID-19 pandemic



Ramsay's GP Liaison Officers pivoted to support doctors by hosting

**153**

RACGP-accredited virtual GP education events, featuring 239 medical specialists, attended by almost

**4,500**

GPs across Australia.



Each month, hosted more than

**500**

telehealth meetings to support more than

**2,500**

participants who could not attend hospital due to COVID-19 restrictions:

Antenatal classes and midwife consultations

Mental health therapy sessions and group day programs

Day rehabilitation sessions

Provided free training and resources to external aged care providers in New South Wales and Queensland to equip them with skills to minimise the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in their facilities.



Developed a new national QR code screening system to streamline the visitor entry process at Ramsay sites.

More than

**100,000**

people per week were screened to identify anybody at risk of having COVID-19.

Despite challenging conditions, Ramsay supported hundreds of local construction jobs by continuing with

**11**

development projects, totalling a capital investment of

**\$267m**

nationally.

Notable investments in metropolitan areas at Greenslopes in Brisbane (\$72.3m), Hollywood in Perth (\$67.7m) and Westmead in Western Sydney (\$29.5m) continued through COVID restrictions, including Ramsay's deep commitment to regional areas through investments at Dudley in Orange (\$7.8m) and Nowra (\$9.6m).

Ramsay's community pharmacy network supported the Federal Government's Home Medicines Service during the pandemic, by delivering medications to the homes of more than

**3,800**

vulnerable people, reducing their potential exposure to the virus.



Financially supported at least

**42**

struggling Australian businesses during lockdown by purchasing food from local restaurants, cafés, suppliers and bakeries for Ramsay health care workers.







# Learnings from COVID-19

- Ramsay's overwhelming primary focus during the pandemic was to protect the safety and wellbeing of our patients, staff and doctors.
- We are extremely proud of our teams for diligently and compassionately responding to the crisis, delivering consistent high-quality patient care while strengthening our culture of 'people caring for people'.
- The pandemic has highlighted the importance of having robust public and private health care systems that work cohesively together. While Ramsay was significantly impacted by elective surgery restrictions in Australia, we remained committed to assisting with the pandemic response by making our resources and staff available to assist the public sector.
- Ramsay implemented comprehensive pandemic management plans in more than 70 Ramsay hospitals, clinics and day surgeries to ensure health care workers could respond rapidly, expertly and safely. These plans have been accompanied by new local procedures, education and training of all staff, and the ongoing procurement and modelling of personal protective equipment.

## Looking to the future

- We remain committed to proactively responding to developments in Australia associated with COVID-19. Ramsay's updates and improvements to policies and procedures during the pandemic means we are well-prepared to manage future challenges associated with this virus.
- Ramsay will continue to leverage its experience and expertise in delivering health care services to rural and regional areas to ensure these communities have access to the same high-quality health care treatments as their city counterparts.
- The pandemic has highlighted the appetite for accessing in-home rehabilitation and hospital care services. Ramsay recognises the importance of providing coordinated care during and after a patient's hospitalisation, launching "Ramsay Connect" to offer these in-home services. We will continue to focus on this integrated care delivery model, which is already being embraced by patients, doctors and health professionals who want greater choice and convenience about how patients receive care.
- The impacts of COVID-19 on the mental wellbeing of Australians means mental health service delivery will play an even greater role in our society into the future. Excellent, accessible mental health care will be another key focus for Ramsay which has a 56-year history of providing high quality mental health treatments.
- Ramsay will continue to make investments to ensure the ongoing provision of high quality patient care and enhanced capacity to meet the growing needs of Australians. Our enduring focus on providing greater access to social health infrastructure, even while being significantly impacted by elective surgery restrictions during the pandemic, is testament to Ramsay's commitment to being Australia's leading and integrated private health care operator.







# Case studies

## SYDNEY, NSW - North Shore Private Hospital

During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, North Shore Private Hospital reached an agreement with Sydney local Health District to admit and operate on public tumour patients who normally receive treatment at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney. This agreement allowed the surgeons of the Bone and Soft Tissue Sarcoma Unit to access theatre lists, which enabled time-critical operations to proceed, such as major surgeries with multiple surgeons and post-operative ICU requirements, as well as smaller procedures such as biopsies. It also avoided treatment delays for patients with chemotherapy treatment schedules.

A 28-year-old woman with osteosarcoma of the pelvis was one of the public patients who received treatment at North Shore Private Hospital during the pandemic. She required general and orthopaedic surgeons to perform hemipelvic resection with a custom-made 3D printed titanium pelvic implant. This allowed for immediate stability, pain relief and return to walking. Any delay could have compromised her pelvis, or allowed for spread of the tumour to other sites.

Surgeons of the NSW Bone and Soft Tissue Sarcoma Unit (Paul Stalley, Richard Boyle, Maurice Guzman and Daniel Franks) said: "We still have not returned to pre-COVID operating in the public system and thus access via North Shore Private Hospital has been absolutely critical for our patients, not just with bone tumours or sarcoma, but other cancers requiring urgent surgical care. Quite simply, patients' lives would have been affected terribly without this access and we thank all involved for its inception."

## MELBOURNE, VIC - Warringal Private Hospital, Donvale Rehabilitation Hospital, The Avenue Hospital, Masada Private Hospital, Glenferrie Private Hospital, Waverley Private Hospital, Mitcham Private Hospital, Peninsula Private Hospital, Albert Road Clinic, Linacre Private Hospital, Beleura Private Hospital and Frances Perry House

In July 2020, a continued rise in COVID-19 case numbers in the greater Melbourne area prompted the Department of Health and Human Services to request Ramsay Health Care to re-start its pandemic agreement in Victoria. Ramsay's significant size in terms of bed numbers, workforce capacity, and locations across Victoria meant we played a key role in helping the public hospital system respond to the second wave of COVID-19.

Ramsay acted quickly to redeploy staff to work more than 1500 shifts in eight residential aged care facilities. As well as caring for these vulnerable people in their homes, five of Ramsay's Victorian sites admitted 85 aged care residents and supported residential services residents into their facilities.

64 of these aged care residents were among the 72 COVID positive patients who were admitted to Peninsula Private Hospital, Warringal Private Hospital and Glenferrie Hospital. We constantly reviewed our processes and PPE supplies to ensure the safety of our people and set up a comprehensive asymptomatic testing program for our employees in Victoria who managed COVID patients.

Ramsay staff from across Melbourne worked shifts at Peninsula Private Hospital as they responded to provide public services following the closure of a number of wards and the furloughing of more than 700 public staff at Frankston Hospital. Impressively, Ramsay staff from other hospitals filled at least 40 shifts per day for Peninsula Private Hospital.

As well as caring for COVID patients and aged care residents, Ramsay's Victorian sites have admitted approximately 1,500 public patients since the start of the pandemic for both medical and surgical treatments.

The Deputy Secretary of the Health and Wellbeing division of Victoria's Department of Health and Human Services, Terry Symonds, said: "It's been inspiring to watch your staff and management teams respond in a heartbeat to the needs of the most vulnerable members of the community. I know the circumstances in aged care facilities have been far from ideal and it must be incredibly challenging for the staff on the floor. I just wanted to say thank you. I am in awe of the work of your teams."



## IPSWICH, QLD - St Andrew's Ipswich Private Hospital

St Andrew's Ipswich Private Hospital has a longstanding and positive relationship with Ipswich General Hospital and the wider West Moreton community. When the pandemic took hold in Australia in March 2020, staff and doctors at St Andrew's Ipswich Private Hospital stepped up to assist. Since then, the hospital has performed 847 surgical cases for the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service and cleared approximately 500 additional patients from the public sector's outpatient waiting lists.

When a COVID-19 cluster broke out in Ipswich in September 2020, more than 220 staff from the public hospital were forced to isolate at home as a precaution. Subsequently, the staff and doctors of St Andrew's Ipswich Private Hospital answered the public health sector's call for greater assistance. In just one month, St Andrew's admitted 51 medical patients and performed 96 public patient surgeries across the specialties of ear, nose and throat surgery, general surgery, gynaecology and cardiology.

CEO Claire Thurwood said: "We believe that in times like these we must all band together, both public and private sectors, to ensure the people of West Moreton continue to have uninterrupted access to the medical services they require."

## PERTH, WA - Joondalup Health Campus

Joondalup Health Campus was an early responder at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia, caring for what was the biggest single cohort of COVID-19 patients in any Australian hospital at the time. The Ramsay-operated facility was called on to accept 30 COVID-positive patients from the beleaguered cruise ship, the Artania, which was anchored alongside Fremantle Port.

At that point, Joondalup Health Campus's COVID-19 clinic had been operational for five days, the hospital had three COVID-19 positive inpatients – at least one from another cruise ship - and a raft of strategies had been put in place to prepare for the pandemic. There were other challenges not just related to the pandemic: most of the patients from the Artania were aged over 70, and very few spoke English – most were from Germany, and some were the ship's crew from the Philippines and Indonesia.

At least one patient had been ventilated prior to being evacuated from the cruise vessel. After arrival at Joondalup Health Campus, two were admitted to the Intensive Care Unit and one to the High Dependency Unit. The rest were admitted to wards that had been specially prepared with negative pressure to reduce the risk of infection spreading throughout the hospital. A PPE committee was created to distribute equipment and training on the appropriate use of PPE was rapidly rolled out, which helped to alleviate staff anxiety. Cleaning requirements more than doubled and laundry was collected in dissolvable bags to reduce handling, four theatres at the end of the theatre complex were designated a "COVID pod", and the hospital was quickly rearranged to create a designated COVID-19 Intensive Care Unit.

Joondalup Health Campus was ready for the challenge and proud to come to the aid of people who needed it most during this unprecedented global health crisis. The patients who spoke publicly praised the compassion and expertise of the WA staff who supported them during their stay.







