

COVID-19

RURAL AND REMOTE RESPONSE

Media release

Thursday 9 April 2020

Be a good egg — stay at home this Easter

Thinking of travelling to your holiday home or a rural destination for Easter or the school holidays?

Think again.

That's the warning today from the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), as they urge all Australians to stay put at their usual place of residence and maintain strict social distancing practices.

"We are extremely concerned that urban Australians travelling to our coastal, alpine or other rural communities will carry coronavirus from the cities into more of these communities" **Dr Adam Coltzau, Clinical Lead for RDAA and ACRRM's COVID-19 Rural and Remote Response, said.**

"We are also concerned that, should they fall ill, they will put an enormous strain on rural hospitals and health services at a time when these are already under immense pressure.

"We can't be clearer – holiday homes and rural destinations are 'no go' zones this Easter. They are not safer places to be than the cities. Just don't go there.

"We are also urging rural Australians not to travel to other rural communities or the cities during Easter or the school holidays, nor go ahead with social events they might normally have with their friends or wider family networks – even if they think they are 'just' small gatherings.

"This Easter won't be a normal Easter. These school holidays won't be the normal school holidays. And the usual big family get togethers just can't happen at the moment.

"It's unfortunate, but this is a small price to pay if we are to save lives.

"It's not only older Australians who are being impacted by this virus – younger Australians are also ending up in hospital and intensive care, and younger people overseas are also dying from it.

"So it is critical you stay at home and restrict physical contact only to those you normally live with.

"Don't even think it's okay to visit your elderly parents or your grandparents. Catch up with them over the phone or Skype instead. Coronavirus doesn't travel down telephone lines.

"You may not think you have COVID-19, but given symptoms may not be apparent for two weeks, you may be infected and may not know it yourself.

"Don't risk our rural communities, and don't risk your own and your family's health.

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“Be a good egg and just stay put at your normal place of residence this Easter.”

Find more information on how to protect yourself, your family and community from COVID-19 at www.health.gov.au.

A high resolution photo of Dr Adam Coltzau is available here:

<https://www.rdaa.com.au/documents/item/712>

A high resolution photo of ACRRM President, Dr Ewen McPhee, is available here:

<https://www.rdaa.com.au/documents/item/968>

A high resolution photo of RDAA President, Dr John Hall, is available here:

<https://www.rdaa.com.au/documents/item/687>

Available for interview:

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