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A letter from the Principal



Dear HCC Families,

You will not be surprised to know that I have been tracking reports regarding COVID-19 since the outbreak was first reported. I have written this paper in an attempt to 'download' a condensed version of my COVID-19 brain. There is always more information and from a wide range of sources.

I have used as my sources, the Federal and State Governments, the Federal and State Health Departments. I have also used the ABC News as our National News service, which is generally conservative, and I have begun to use InDaily, an online magazine, because I have found it to be conservative and in line with authoritative sources. I have not listened to or sought any information from social media. You may remember that the first Government predictions were dire, preparing for up to 160,000 deaths in Australia under certain circumstances. I did not, however, save this document and cannot find an electronic version of it. Bless God that we did not end up in that scenario. I hope that this information will place you in an even more informed position as we continue to negotiate our path through this outbreak, and as our leaders develop ways to chart a path out of the restrictions without allowing a resurgence from new sources.

The first reported case of the Novel Coronavirus, COVID-19 in Australia was on 25 January 2020 in Victoria⁽¹⁾. Since then and up to the time of writing this paper (29/4/2020) Australia has had 6,725⁽²⁾ cases and 84 deaths in Australia's population of 25,671,622⁽³⁾. This is an infection rate of 0.000026% and a death rate of 0.0000003% of the population or 1.2% of infections. South Australia has had 438⁽²⁾ cases and 4⁽²⁾ deaths. Since April 11 in South Australia there have been a total of 9 new cases with a pattern of: 1,0,2,2,0,1,1,0,0,0,2,0,0,0,0,0,0⁽⁴⁾. There have been no transmissions recorded for 7 consecutive days⁽⁵⁾. There are 14⁽⁵⁾ active cases in quarantine or in hospital in South Australia. In South Australia we are in a very good position with regard to the virus outbreak. Our Federal and State Governments and Health Departments repeatedly remind us that Schools are safe places⁽⁶⁾.

In South Australia we are in a very good position with regard to the virus outbreak. Our Federal and State Governments and Health Departments remind us that schools are safe places. In South Australia there have been no cases of student-to-student transmission and no cases of student-to-teacher transmission⁽⁶⁾. In South Australia we have now had 7 days in a row of zero transmissions in the whole state. The fact that we are currently not seeing new clusters emerge also tells us that there are not hidden carriers in the community, because, if there were, we would see people around them

getting sick, which is not the case. The lack of transmissibility through children is one of the key reasons for the change in messaging regarding children and social distancing.

In terms of transmissibility of COVID-19, the chief method for the virus entering the body is through the mouth, eyes and/or nose, when a person touches their face with their hands⁽⁷⁾. A person's hands come into contact with the virus after it has landed on a surface either through the touch of an infected person or from droplets when an infected person sneezes or coughs⁽⁸⁾. According to the ABC news, one report documented the length of time that COVID-19 could be traced on certain surfaces. It did also state that after time, it was not the full viral load that had landed on the surface. The report then spoke about the half-life of the amount of detectable virus. The half-life is how long it takes for half of the virus to have degraded and no longer be active⁽⁹⁾. This is the same report which mentioned the virus being present in the air for up to three hours. This test was conducted under experimental conditions not found in day to day life. The report was based on an experiment conducted in a very controlled environment. In the experiment the virus was aerosolized using a machine and under very high pressure, to create aerosol droplets of 5 microns or less. These machine made droplets are light enough to be suspended in the air. The droplets from coughs and sneezes and even respiratory droplets are not like the machine made droplets and are all larger and heavier than this⁽¹⁰⁾ being more likely to fall and not remain in the air.

In summary, the data shows that in South Australia we have good containment of the outbreak of COVID-19 and that schools are safe places. The disease is not airborne and the 'three hours in the air' were achieved in conditions that are not found in the real world. This was also the case with the virus-on-surfaces tests. Further, children are not asymptomatic transmitters. Children have not passed it child-to-child in schools nor passed it to teachers, and further, we know that diligent hygiene practices are the best defense against catching any illness, COVID-19 included. We all have a responsibility to look after ourselves and each other and we will not decrease our vigilance. It is my hope and desire that these thoughts provide further clarification and ease some of our tensions.

Blessings in the name of the Lord Jesus,



Dominic Hopps
Principal

¹ <https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-greg-hunt-mp/media/first-confirmed-case-of-novel-coronavirus-in-australia>

² <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-current-situation-and-case-numbers>

³ <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs%40.nsf/94713ad445ff1425ca25682000192af2/1647509ef7e25faac2568a900154b63?OpenDocument>

⁴ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-17/coronavirus-cases-data-reveals-how-covid-19-spreads-in-australia/12060704?nw=0>

⁵ <https://indaily.com.au/news/2020/04/28/coronavirus-what-we-know-today-april-28/>

⁶ Letter, Department for Health and wellbeing, dated 22/05/2020, ref: A2022420

⁷ <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/good-hygiene-for-coronavirus-covid-19>

⁸ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2020-03-15/coronavirus-covid-19-handwashing-soap-sanitizer-advice/12051206>

⁹ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2020-03-20/how-long-does-coronavirus-last-on-surfaces/12074330>

¹⁰ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2020-04-16/coronavirus-airborne-transmission-3-hours-covid-19/12146526>