

Date: 6 May 2020

It's 'game on' for increased COVID-19 testing in Newcastle

A six-lane, drive-through COVID-19 clinic that can swab up to 900 people a day will open at McDonald Jones Stadium on Friday, greatly boosting capacity in the Newcastle area.

Public Health Physician Dr David Durrheim said although case numbers are stabilising in the region, the ten day drive-through clinic will assist efforts to capture any COVID-19 cases still circulating in the community.

"With Mother's Day fast approaching, this is a great opportunity for Newcastle locals who have symptoms to be screened for COVID-19" Dr Durrheim said.

"It will still be important to observe physical distancing and not visit even if you are slightly unwell, but it may put some peoples' mind at ease that the new symptoms are not COVID-19.

"Beating COVID-19 is a team sport and we're asking all locals to play their part."

Anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough or shortness of breath, is urged to get tested.

People who have even mild symptoms such as fatigue, new muscle aches or pains, a change in taste or smell or a new runny nose can also contact the clinic to arrange testing.

NSW has one of the highest testing rates in the world, with capacity to test over 8000 people a day.

In addition to the McDonald Jones Stadium service, Hunter New England Health continues to operate clinics at Calvary Mater Newcastle, John Hunter, Maitland, and Belmont hospitals for Newcastle and Hunter locals.

Testing is by appointment only, which can be made from today. Those wishing to be tested can contact the drive-through clinic on 4964 7497 to arrange an appointment, prior to attending.

The clinic will operate 8am to 4.30pm from Friday 8 May until Sunday 17 May 2020.