



## **COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) PATIENT UPDATE #6**

25 May 2020

Dear Valued Repromed Patient,

It is fantastic news that South Australia is doing so well with managing the COVID-19 pandemic with nil cases reported for 2 weeks now. Well done SA!

This milestone is particularly important as it suggests there are currently no undiagnosed COVID-19 cases within our community given that the more strict lockdown conditions have been lifted for the incubation period of this virus (2 weeks).

Some of you may be aware that we have been pro-actively screening patients for COVID-19 prior to their egg retrieval procedure for 3 weeks now - with no positive cases identified to date. We appreciate the cooperation of those who have undergone testing. We understand having a throat/nose swab is not always comfortable, however as international experience has shown, many young people with COVID-19 can have no to very mild symptoms therefore we felt this to be a worthwhile precaution. Repromed is the only IVF unit in SA taking this added precaution of pre-screening patients due in theatre. Of course, we will continue to monitor the situation across SA and if after a prolonged period there are no new cases of COVID-19 we will cease our screening program. However, it is probably unrealistic to expect that SA will have no new cases over winter and as such we anticipate the need to continue our screening program for the time being. Your health and that of your fellow patients and our staff is of utmost importance - hence our "abundance of caution" approach.

Provided the number of COVID-19 cases continues to be relatively low in SA over the coming week, we anticipate being in a position to offer limited face-to-face consulting at Dulwich from Monday June 1st. As our waiting rooms cannot accommodate our usual number of patients while maintaining recommended social distancing guidelines, priority for face-to-face visits has been given to first clinical consultations and complex review appointments. Routine review appointments (e.g. setting up a frozen embryo transfer cycle, discussing minor results) will remain as Telehealth consultations. Furthermore, given the size of our ultrasound scanning rooms, the current ban on partners/support people attending pregnancy scans will remain in place until the 1st of June. However if COVID-19 cases remain relatively low we will consider partners being able to attend pregnancy scans once again provided appropriate facemasks are worn. The decision on this will be made later this week.

Finally, as a result of the pent up IVF demand created by the postponement of elective surgeries, the next few weeks we experience a third more patients undergoing an egg retrieval operation within our day surgery unit compared to our average activity levels. To accommodate our patients, we have expanded our theatre operations to 4 days per week as well as extending opening hours on these days. Unfortunately we have had to still delay all non IVF related surgery by a few weeks. Impacted patients have already been contacted by our Day Surgery team. On a personal note, if you have been affected by this constraint, I apologise for this inconvenience and hope you understand that these restrictions are necessary in order to maintain the safety of our patients, treating specialists, our nursing staff and laboratory scientists.

Thank you once again for your patience and best of luck with your treatment.

Kind regards,  
Professor Kelton Tremellen  
Medical Director