

Australian Capital Territory

Explanatory Statement

Public Health (Notifiable Conditions) Determination 2020

Disallowable Instrument DI2020–229

made under the

Public Health Act 1997, s 100 (Notifiable Conditions – Ministerial determination)

Part 6 of the *Public Health Act 1997* (the Act) provides for the monitoring and investigation of notifiable conditions so that public health action may be carried out in order to minimise the adverse public health effects of such conditions.

Under subsection 100 (1) of the Act the minister may in writing, determine-

- (a) a disease or medical condition to be a notifiable condition; and
- (b) a disease referred to in paragraph (a) to be a transmissible notifiable condition.

The list of notifiable conditions determined under s 100 was last updated on 17 August 2017 through DI2017-210. This instrument adds to the previous list of notifiable diseases coronavirus disease 2019, also known as COVID-19, caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. The determination is a disallowable instrument for the purposes of the *Legislation Act 2001*.

COVID-19 was declared a temporary notifiable condition by the ACT Chief Health Officer (the CHO) on 13 February 2020 through DI 2020-18. That decision was made on information and advice provided by both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Commonwealth Department of Health about an outbreak of a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans, which was first identified by Chinese authorities on 7 January 2020 in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.

Since that time the WHO declared the outbreak of COVID-19 to be a global pandemic on 11 March 2020, and in response a public health emergency was declared in the ACT on 16 March 2020.

At this moment in time there is currently no vaccine and no treatment for COVID-19. Accordingly, notification of COVID-19 remains essential to enable identification and implementation of disease control measures to contain the spread of the disease.

The determination is a disallowable instrument for the purposes of the *Legislation Act 2001*.