

## Hon Steven Marshall MP

Premier

## Hon Michelle Lensink MLC

Minister for Human Services

Monday 30 March 2020

### **New COVID-19 welfare calls activated for our most vulnerable**

Vulnerable South Australians can opt to receive a free, daily potentially life-saving phone call checking on their welfare in response to COVID-19 – and the Marshall Liberal Government is urging those at risk to sign up to the new service.

The State Government is encouraging the community to register themselves, loved ones and friends for the Red Cross Telecross REDi service.

Specially trained Red Cross staff and volunteers will make the calls, asking clients questions including how they are coping and if they need medical or food supplies, as well as reiterating latest government health advice.

Premier Steven Marshall said the free phone service could be a “lifesaver”.

“I urge the community to register their loved ones and friends for our new, free COVID-19 phone service, activated for our most vulnerable South Australians – it could literally be a lifesaver,” said Premier Marshall.

“Welfare calls are another component of the State Government’s strong plan to reduce the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the health of South Australians.”

Minister for Human Services Michelle Lensink said the phone service has been activated to support South Australians whose wellbeing is impacted as a result of COVID-19 social distancing and self-isolated measures.

“The new, extended service is targeted to older South Australians, people living with disability, those experiencing mental illness people recovering from an illness or accident or anyone with an ongoing health condition who are doing the right thing and self-isolating,” said Minister Lensink.

“We usually activate this service during heatwaves and we’ve witnessed the phone calls helping South Australians in emergency situations every year.

“The service typically makes thousands of calls made every day to our most vulnerable and we’re really urging people to sign up to the new Red Cross COVID-19 service.”

Red Cross South Australian Director Jai O’Toole said he expected many South Australians



“Clients will receive regular wellbeing checks by trained Red Cross staff and volunteers and quite often, this can be the only person they speak to each day,” said Mr O’Toole.

“Our service is being rapidly ramped up so anyone in the community who is self-isolating and at additional risk can receive these free calls.

“Anyone who is signed up to receive the regular phone check-in will be supported through any additional needs they have, whether that is needing food or medication, to the relevant agency or loved one. If the situation is critical and emergency response will be activated”

Vulnerable people, their friends or loved ones can register for the Telecross REDi COVID-19 service by phone 1800 188 071 or register online at [register.redcross.org.au](https://register.redcross.org.au).

Anyone already registered with the service will automatically receive COVID-19 service support.

For people seeking information and advice on COVID-19, they are urged to call the 24/7 National Coronavirus Information Helpline – 1800 020 080.