



# Viruses don't discriminate, and neither should we

Preventing stigma can save lives.

Stigma and fear robs people of their human dignity and worth.

?

## What is stigma?

When we treat someone unfairly because they have COVID-19 or we victimise a person for spreading the virus.

?

## Why is stigma harmful?

- Drives people to hide the illness to avoid discrimination
- Prevents people from seeking health care immediately
- Discourages them from adopting healthy behaviours.

?

## What is discrimination?

It is the unfair treatment of someone else, or a group of people, for example, people who have COVID-19.

### DOs

- ✓ **Do talk about** the new **coronavirus** disease (COVID-19).
- ✓ **Do speak accurately about the COVID-19 risks**, based on scientific information and the latest official health advice. Know your facts so you can correct misinformation when needed.
- ✓ **Do follow the steps that work to prevent the virus from spreading**. There are simple steps we can all take to keep ourselves, our loved ones, and the most vulnerable safe.
- ✓ **Do speak to children in an age-appropriate way** about COVID-19.
- ✓ **Do support families, caregivers and health care providers** affected by COVID-19 with love and compassion without putting yourself or anyone else at risk.

### DON'Ts

- ✗ **Don't** use language designed to **generate fear**, like 'plague' or 'apocalypse.'
- ✗ **Don't share information from sources that are not trusted** or reliable or spread rumours or fake news.
- ✗ **Don't encourage behaviour that is contrary to government advice**.
- ✗ **Don't allow people to become isolated**. Those infected or at risk need your compassionate support while maintaining physical distance.
- ✗ **Don't stigmatise those recovered from COVID-19**.
- ✗ **Don't blame people by talking about them** 'transmitting COVID-19' or 'infecting others' or 'spreading the virus'. Every one of us is capable of contracting, carrying and transmitting the virus. It is an invisible enemy.
- ✗ **Don't** use language that devalues and **disrespects individuals who have become sick** with COVID-19. We are all at risk of infection.

We will continue to manage this as a team.

**Always show respect and care  
to everyone around us.**