

## **RELAXING RULES – STAY VIGILANT**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MONDAY MAY 11, 2020**

With states and territories around the country beginning to relax social rules, National Seniors Australia is reminding everyone to maintain their own social distancing and hygiene rules.

The country's peak consumer and advocacy body for older Australians is concerned some people will believe this is a green light to go back to normal.

National Seniors Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke, cited the examples of Singapore and Germany where a second wave of the coronavirus spread after rules in those two countries were relaxed.

"People must still follow the advice of medical authorities and not see this as a time where we can start hugging one another or shaking hands," he said.

"It's not a case of 'she'll be right mate.' Our own social distancing rules must still be maintained as the virus has not been eradicated."

Mr Henschke also supports the comments by NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian that we must all still behave as if we have the virus or the potential to get the virus.

"The NSW Premier said if we want to maintain the great result we are achieving in flattening the curve, then every time we leave the house we have to act as though we have the virus or we are going to come into contact with someone who has the virus."

National Seniors also recently helped set up a hotline for older Australians specifically about COVID-19.

The hotline, set up with funding from the federal government and includes other advocacy groups such as Council of the Ageing, Older Persons Advocacy Network, Dementia Australia, is for seniors who are feeling isolated or want to talk to someone about the virus.

That number is 1800 171 866 and is staffed by friendly operators who are there to listen and help.

**ENDS**

**Ian Henschke is available for comment**