

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

From the desk of
**Executive
Operations**



16 July 2021

Dear resident representatives and relatives

It has been another significant week in the community with additional measures introduced for COVID-19 testing requirements for those residing within the Greater Sydney area, and are travelling more than 50km for essential work purposes. These requirements apply to all staff, volunteers and contractors, but not for visitors if you are travelling more than 50km to a Care Home. Of course, if you reside in the Greater Sydney Area, you should only be leaving your home if the visit is considered essential.

COVID-19 Cases

The number of positive cases in the past week continues to fluctuate daily but remain very high including a further 97 new cases in the past 24 hours, with 29 of these cases being infectious while in the community for two or more days. This brings the total number of active cases in NSW to 1026, with 75 people now in hospital including 18 in Intensive Care. Of the 18 patients in Intensive Care, one of them has had one dose of the vaccination and the remainder have not been vaccinated. In view of the large number that continues to be in the community while infectious, it is anticipated that the numbers will increase in the coming days, and additional restrictions may be implemented.

Goulburn Cases

It has been confirmed this week that contractors from Sydney were working at Goulburn Hospital while infectious with COVID-19. As a result of this advice, contact was made with the Public Health Unit and a decision was made to implement the same restrictions currently in place at our homes in Bundanoon and the Illawarra, at least until the extent of community transmissions is known. This was communicated to family members this week. The Rapid Response Team was also contacted and is ready to support the home at Goulburn in the event of a positive case. It was fortunate that despite no previous cases in the area, the requirement for all visitors to wear face masks certainly reduced the risk of an outbreak. The current restrictions will remain in place until at least next Monday.

Visitor Restrictions

At present, all of the care homes in Bundanoon, Goulburn and the Illawarra have excluded all visits except to those providing essential care services or if the resident is at end-of-life. The criteria for essential care has been based on the support, frequency and purpose of these visits. It is understandable that the longer the lockdown continues the more residents may need support, particularly if they have mental health issues. This will be reviewed with the relevant Managers early next week to determine the need to broaden the definition of essential care. All of these visits must be in the residents' rooms and face masks must be worn.

At the moment the only home in NSW where these restrictions do not apply is Queanbeyan. Only two visitors are allowed each day, and the visits should be in the residents' room or another suitable location within the care home. The only requirement in Calwell and Stirling is that face masks must be worn.

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

From the desk of
**Executive
Operations**



16 July 2021

Staff Vaccinations

While we have some clarification around the timeframes and criteria for staff vaccinations, there still has not been a Public Health Order provided on the exemptions that will apply. With the first dose required by 17 September 2021, we have continued to work closely with Local Health Districts, Primary Health Networks and General Practices to provide options for staff to be vaccinated. There was a vaccination clinic held today at Bundanoon for staff and new residents who have not been vaccinated, through the South West Sydney Local Health District, and another one will be at Mount Terry next week, through the local GP.

Restrictive Practices

There have been changes introduced from 1 July 2021 as a result of the recommendations from the Aged Care Royal Commission regarding restrictive practices. These changes mean more specific responsibilities under the Aged Care Act regarding any restrictive practices, which are broader than the previous environmental and chemical restraint requirements. If this applies to any resident, such as a low bed, for example, then you may be contacted regarding consent.

I understand that the longer the lockdown continues, the more challenging it will become, but I want to reiterate that we will be looking at how we can support our residents and families while still maintaining the focus on the safety of our residents. Your support, as always, is genuinely appreciated.

Thank you for the many emails sent this week, they are encouraging and provide valuable feedback on where we can improve. Your feedback is always welcome and is important for us if we are going to establish trust and provide a quality service. There are many ways that you can provide this feedback including contacting your local management team, calling 1800 927 744 or by emailing us at warrigal@warrigal.com.au.

Yours Sincerely,

Craig Smith
Executive Leader – Service Integrated Communities