

17 July 2020

Re: Latest Update on COVID-19

Dear resident representatives and relatives

It has been an eventful week, with an increased media focus on aged care as the situation in Victoria has now impacted on 39 of their Residential Aged Care Homes. The spread of positive cases from Victoria to areas in NSW has been particularly concerning, with community transmission rates growing. While we have been vigilant with safety, these events have been a reminder that this virus is a constant threat, particularly to vulnerable older people. I am pleased to confirm that there are still currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Warrigal.

On Wednesday evening this week, NSW Health provided advice to Aged Care Providers requesting a number of measures be implemented; and included the following:

- Residential aged care facilities in the South Western Sydney local government areas should not allow any visitors until the end of July, except for palliation (end of life) circumstances.
- All residential aged care staff who work in residential aged care facilities located within the South Western Sydney local government areas must wear a surgical face mask while working in the home
- Until the end of July, any visitors to any NSW residential aged care home will be excluded if they have been in the local government areas covered by the South Western Sydney local health district
- Staff and visitors who have visited any of the specific locations linked to the COVID-19 outbreak in South Western Sydney area should be excluded for a period of 14 days since their visit to the location

In view of this advice, all visits to Warrigal Bundanoon were stopped from Thursday, three staff will be excluded from entering the home for 14 days as they have been to a listed premises, and all staff at Bundanoon will be wearing face masks. We will be conducting training at all of our homes on the correct technique for wearing face masks, and staff in all of our homes have now been encouraged to wear them at work. We are also going to be using more training videos on the correct techniques for putting on and taking off Personal Protective Equipment.

This week the trial of the Special Care Unit commenced where we have isolated a section of the home at Warrigal Warilla and are treating it as a COVID-19 positive unit. This will continue for another week, and has already provided some valuable insights into the additional work and techniques that would need to be implemented in the tragic circumstances of an actual outbreak.

We are anticipating that the current increase in community transmissions in NSW will continue, which is the reason that we have increased our safety measures even further. The screening tool that is used to monitor staff and visitors entering into all of our care homes has been updated again this week to reflect community transmission trends and virus hotspots.

While there have been no mandatory changes to the current visiting arrangements, except at Bundanoon, if you have compassionate visits approved it is encouraged that you re-consider the need for these visits in the current high risk environment. The situation within the community has escalated in the past week and we are actively monitoring this very closely each day. Please be aware that we may reluctantly need to act very quickly, which was the case at Warrigal Bundanoon this week, and if this is the case you will be contacted promptly and updated on these changes.

I will continue to keep you updated regularly and again, thank you for your continued support and understanding during these very difficult and disruptive times. You can, if you have any further enquiries call our Customer Relations Information Line on 1800 927 744, operating seven days a week between 9am to 9pm. You can also email us at warrigal@warrigal.com.au or alternatively for more general COVID19 advice please contact the 24-hour National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

Yours Sincerely,



Craig Smith
Executive Leader - Service Integrated Communities