

18 September 2020

### **Re: Latest Update on COVID-19**

Dear resident representatives and relatives

I am pleased to confirm that there are still currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Warrigal.

In Australia, a total of 26,513 cases have been reported, including 1661 actives, with 23,031 recovered cases and 788 deaths. There are 83 residential aged care facilities currently active with COVID-19, with 454 residents still active and 580 deaths in aged care. There have been 213 residential aged care homes impacted, while 98 of these have only had one positive case, indicating that the measures being implemented with rapid response teams is effective. The increased protocols with infection control has also seen a significant reduction in Influenza Outbreaks this year, with only one of our care homes having an outbreak during winter.

This week we participated in meetings with the Local Health Districts (LHDs) in Southern NSW and Illawarra Shoalhaven, where the regional partnerships continue to be strengthened. This includes the formation of an Emergency Operations Committee in Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD where Warrigal is represented through our CEO, Mark Sewell. We are also pleased that the ISLHD have indicated that they have 100 beds dedicated to aged care residents that would be activated in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak. The relationships with the LHDs combined with the results of external audits and regular reviews of our outbreak management plan are important factors when reviewing our COVID-19 risk register. There are still 80 items on our risk register, however the number requiring management action has reduced, with most requiring the existing controls to be monitored, which is undertaken regularly.

While we have a communication plan that would be activated in an outbreak, one of the options that we would like to pursue is holding a zoom meeting with families which allows us to be interactive with our communications. This would require we have a current email address, and there are still a number of relatives where communication is not sent electronically. It would be appreciated if you could ensure that we have your email address to facilitate zoom meetings if required; and the email addresses can be provided to staff at your local home.

The current NSW Health Order that requires any person entering an aged care home to have a flu vaccination expires on 21 September 2020. We have been advised today that this requirement has now been extended until 17 December 2020.

We continue to be vigilant on screening anyone entering our aged care homes; and have recently trialed a Visitor Management Solution at Albion Park Rail which uses thermal imaging for temperature checking. This trial proved to be very successful, and we are looking at the option of implementing this across all of our homes in the coming months.

There has now been a total of 356 staff tests conducted including 11 in the past week. In addition to the staff tests, a further 6 tests were completed for residents, taking the total number of residents tested to 180, all with negative results.

I will continue to keep you updated regularly and again thank you for your support, which is communicated through our social media and emails sent each week.

You can call our Customer Relations Information Line on 1800 927 744, operating seven days a week between 9am to 9pm, if you have any further enquiries. You can also email us at [warrigal@warrigal.com.au](mailto:warrigal@warrigal.com.au) with any feedback you might have or alternatively for more general advice you may want to contact the Older Persons Advocacy Network on 1800 700 600.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS' or similar initials, located below the 'Yours Sincerely,' text.

**Craig Smith**  
**Executive Leader - Service Integrated Communities**