

8 May 2020

Re: Latest Update on COVID-19

Dear resident representatives and relatives

I would like to once again thank you for your understanding during these difficult times, our priority continues to be on ensuring the safety and well-being of our residents and customers. I value the feedback that many of you have given, and I am pleased you feel reassured with the actions Warrigal has implemented.

The screening tool that is used to monitor staff and any visitors coming into the home according to the criteria previously outlined, has again been modified to include whether the COVIDsafe app has been downloaded. While this cannot be made compulsory, we are encouraging staff to download this for the safety of everyone in the home. The tool has also been amended to include very specific symptoms. To date, we have tested 88 staff, with no positive results. A further 17 staff who are not showing any symptoms but are still considered to be a risk- based on them not being in a public place where social distancing may not have been followed are in isolation.

We have continued to recruit additional staff to ensure that we have the resources to meet the care and emotional support needs of your loved ones, with an additional 37 staff commencing at Warrigal in the past week. We have also advertised for Pastoral Carers who will complement the work of the existing staff in supporting the spiritual and emotional needs of residents and customers.

This week, the peak body for non-profit aged care providers, Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA), released the results of polling that was conducted that shows a significant majority of Australians (69%) support aged care homes limiting visitors with 10% opposing visitor bans. We appreciate that as restrictions become more relaxed in the community, this may change the expectations from people wanting to visit. In the coming weeks we will be seeking your input via surveys to get a better understanding of your views on the appropriate measures to ensure access and safety.

In addition to this the following actions have also been undertaken since the previous update:

- The planning of a Special Care Unit at Warrigal for residents who may become diagnosed with Coronavirus has continued, with modifications to the area being undertaken and additional staff being recruited. We have also had a meeting with the Local Health District regarding the way the unit would operate and will be utilising the expertise of their Clinicians to train staff.

- There have been a lot of additional activities this week with high teas, photo walls established, hand massages, cakes and gifts to celebrate Mother's Day. Additional staff will be working on Sunday at all of our homes to facilitate contact with families and to deliver items to residents/customers including flowers and cards that family members may drop off at the home. We do understand the importance of this day and are looking to make it special for everyone.
- It has been a week since the Safe Visiting Area commenced at Shell Cove and this week the one at Bundanoon was completed and visiting commenced on Thursday. It is important that these areas have sufficient space and separate entrances, and with the success of the trial, we have now identified areas at each home where work will continue on having these constructed next week.

Over the last week, many family members have continued to provide feedback, and one of the areas that have caused confusion is the window visits at different homes. While the Safe Visiting Areas may result in the reduction of requests for window visits, please continue to coordinate these through the management at each home so staff can be engaged to facilitate each visit.

I will continue to keep you updated regularly and again thank you for your support and understanding. If you have any further enquiries, please call our Customer Relations Information Line on 1800 927 744, now extended to operate 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