

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

From the desk of
**Executive
Operations**



22 April 2022

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

I hope that you all had a safe and happy Easter. It was a very different Easter to the past few years, where visitors were not permitted into care homes. While there were families coming into the homes to celebrate with their loved ones, and a number that left the homes, this does increase the risk of COVID entering the homes while community transmissions remain high. In the past week there were 93,492 cases reported in NSW and 6966 in the ACT. Warrigal continues to be impacted with 26 staff across our 12 care homes currently in isolation due to being COVID positive. Along with total cases remaining high, hospital admissions have also increased with an additional 141 people being admitted to NSW hospitals with COVID in the past week, bringing the current number to 1632, while in the ACT there are 57 people in hospital with COVID, an increase of 1 over the past week.

The most recent information from the Department of Health is from 13 April 2022, indicating that 3,644 aged care homes in Australia have experienced a COVID-19 outbreak, an increase of 437 in the past fortnight. The number of homes with an active outbreak in Australia continues to increase each week, and there are currently 846 active outbreaks in aged care homes, which is 188 more than the previous fortnight. This includes 298 homes in NSW and 13 in the ACT. Sadly, there have been 1,107 deaths in residential aged care homes this year.

Warrigal has two homes currently experiencing an outbreak, with Warrigal Wollongong and Goulburn both having residents testing positive over the past week. The outbreak at Wollongong was contained to one neighbourhood for two weeks, and unfortunately, there are now two residents in another area of the home that have tested positive. The outbreak at Goulburn started over the Easter weekend, and there are now 13 residents throughout the home that have tested positive. We continue to test residents and staff regularly at both of the homes, and hold regular meetings with the respective public health units. In addition to the residents at Goulburn, there are also 13 staff that are positive and a further 7 that are close contacts and unable to work. As a result, we have requested assistance from the Commonwealth for a surge workforce to be provided.

Please be aware that the updated advice issued from NSW Health this week regarding close contacts within a household no longer being required to isolate for 7 days does not apply to staff or visitors entering an aged care home.

In addition to the COVID update, I have summarised below some key points regarding activities at Warrigal:

- The relocation of residents from Warilla has continued. There have now been 30 residents that have transferred to other Warrigal homes, with 27 residents remaining in the home.

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- The mandated timeframe for staff to have received their third vaccination has been extended until 31 May 2022 for staff in NSW, and it remains at 6 months after the second vaccine in ACT.
- We will be facilitating for residents to receive their influenza vaccination and the fourth dose of the COVID vaccine at all of our care homes. If you prefer to organise this for your loved one, please advise staff at the care home.
- This week, our Contact Centre has commenced contacting families to confirm that we have correct contact details and to seek feedback on some key areas including the quality of care and lifestyle activities. This commenced with the relatives at Mount Terry and will assist us in identifying areas for improvement across all of our homes.
- We have received approval from our Board to proceed to lodge Development Applications for a new village comprising 54 villas on the land that we own at Bradman Avenue in Warilla, and for the existing village at Warilla to be redeveloped with apartment blocks. This will take time to be submitted and approved, but we have commenced the communication meetings with the residents at Warilla village.
- It is important that the Visitor Management System is used for every visitor entering a care home, not only so we can undertake contact tracing in the event of an outbreak, but it provides valuable information on the number of visits each resident/customer has daily, and any resident/customer that has not had a visit over the course of week or month.

I continue to welcome your feedback and would encourage you to continue to do this by contacting your local management team, calling 1800 927 744 or by emailing us at warrigal@warrigal.com.au

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS'.

Craig Smith
Executive Leader – Service Integrated Communities