

*Warrigal*

Inspiring communities  
for older people

From the desk of  
**Executive  
Operations**



**12 August 2022**

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

The past fortnight has seen COVID-19 cases in the community decrease, as the impact of the third COVID-19 may have reached its peak earlier than originally anticipated. There have been 71,115 positive COVID-19 cases recorded in NSW in the past week, a decrease of 28,298 from the previous update, which is close to an average of 10,150 cases daily. In the ACT, there have been 3,495 positive COVID-19 cases recorded in the past week, a decrease of 3,111 from the last update. While the decreases are pleasing, to put the overall impact into perspective, Australia has reported just over 9.5 million cases and over 12,000 deaths since the pandemic began, which is why it is important that we ensure that staff and visitors continue to be tested daily with a Rapid Antigen Test before entering the home, and we will continue to maintain regular routine testing of residents.

The most recent information from the Department of Health (from 5 August 2022), indicated that 7,347 aged care homes in Australia have experienced a COVID-19 outbreak, an increase of 501 in the past fortnight. The number of care homes with an active outbreak in Australia is currently 952, which has decreased by 61 from the previous fortnight. The number of active resident cases associated with the current outbreaks is 5,283, which has decreased by 836 in the past fortnight. The total number of resident cases related to the current outbreaks is 14,554 which is an average of 15 residents for each outbreak.

Warrigal experienced its first outbreak on 29 December 2021, and since this time there have been 31 outbreaks that have occurred, with only Mt Warrigal having one outbreak, and all other homes having at least two outbreaks. There have been a total 848 residents that have tested positive during these outbreaks and 484 staff.

The outbreaks at all of our eight care homes highlighted in the previous update have been closed. Unfortunately, we have two additional outbreaks at Coniston and Stirling, which are summarised below:

**A summary of all current outbreaks is provided below:**

**Coniston:** The outbreak commenced on 2 August 2022, with two residents testing positive. This quickly escalated and there are now 37 residents that have tested positive. All of the active cases within the home are on anti-viral medication. There are also 17 staff that have tested positive, including the management team, which has required the support of surge workforce from the Commonwealth, and we are hopeful that clinical support will be provided by the Australian Defence Force in the coming days.

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**Stirling:** The outbreak commenced on 8 August 2022, with 2 residents testing positive in the one section of the home. Further testing has been undertaken and at this stage no further residents or staff have tested positive.

In addition to the COVID update, I have summarised below some key points regarding what is happening at Warrigal and the industry;

- Over the past 4 weeks, despite the outbreaks, there have been a total of 7,793 visits made across the eleven care homes. There have been 118 residents who have not had any visit, and the Managers will ensure that they receive appropriate emotional support if required.
- We have had two visits from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission in the past week at Shell Cove and Mount Terry, focusing on Infection Protection Control. I am pleased to advise that the feedback from the reviews has been positive.
- Last Sunday, we celebrated Aged Care Employee Day, and Warrigal along with other providers celebrated and thanked staff for their contribution, particularly over the past 12 months. We are pleased that the Government is working to improve wages for aged care staff, which was supported by Warrigal at the Fair Work Commission hearings earlier this year.
- The Acting Manager at Goulburn finishes today, and it will be three weeks before someone commences in the role. We are fortunate to have a number of exceptional Managers who are willing to provide support, and over the next three weeks, the General Manager from Stirling, Kim Bradshaw will be relieving as the Manager at Goulburn.
- Warrigal, along with other providers are required to report on Quality Indicators that include pressure injuries, falls, restraint, weight-loss and medication management. These indicators are benchmarked with other providers and are reviewed by our Care Governance Committee. These indicators are likely to be expanded in October and include additional quality of life indicators.
- This month we have been focusing on pressure area care for all our homes, including providing training to staff and undertaking training. Each month there will be a different focus as we look at improving the knowledge of staff and the quality of care being provided.
- In the past fortnight, our CEO, Mark Sewell has announced he will be retiring in the coming months after working at Warrigal for more than 20 years. The recruitment of the new CEO has commenced and is being overseen by representatives from Warrigal's Board of Directors. It is anticipated that the process will take a number of months; and during this time Mark will get an opportunity to visit the staff and residents at all of our care homes.

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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](mailto:warrigal@warrigal.com.au).

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Craig Smith  
Executive Leader – Service Integrated Communities