

*Warrigal*

Inspiring communities  
for older people

From the desk of  
**Executive  
Operations**



**3 December 2021**

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

The past week has seen marginal increases in vaccination rates, with 94.6% of people aged over 16 in NSW having received one dose of the vaccine, with 92.6% fully vaccinated. In the ACT, the percentage of the population over the age of 12 fully vaccinated is now 97.9%. The number of positive cases in NSW decreased by 123 from the previous week, however there are still 1,373 cases in the past seven days, and in the ACT, there were 43 positive cases in the past week, a reduction of 48 from the previous week.

On 24 November, the World Health Organisation announced Omicron a new COVID-19 variant of concern. Based on preliminary evidence that it spreads quickly it is not clear whether Omicron is more transmissible than other variants, including Delta. This new variant was first reported in South Africa, and new cases are now being discovered around the world, including 9 cases in NSW.

As NSW approaches the 95% double dose vaccination target, the NSW Government has announced some further easing of restrictions within the community, however, as aged care homes are still considered to be a high-risk setting, QR Codes and masks will still be required by all visitors. The rollout of the electronic visitor management system will commence with staff training next week, which will then be used by anyone entering the home. Initially this will require personal information, including proof of vaccination. Then, for future visits it will ask the screening questions that are regularly updated and your temperature is taken.

The new system will reduce the amount of administrative work involved, which is why visits are currently limited to the times when there is a staff member at reception. I understand that for a number of families that work full-time, this has been problematic as visiting is not available at all homes on weekends. Commencing from this weekend, visiting will be available at all homes on weekends, with appointments still required and those homes where visiting is not currently occurring on weekends being open for visitors from 10am-2pm. The total number of visits remains at five a week.

The booster program continued this week with 94 residents/customers at Shell Cove attending a clinic within the home, and Bundanoon is scheduled for next week. We will continue to liaise with the Primary Health Network to arrange for clinics in all of our homes over the next eight weeks. I am also pleased to advise that 20 staff at Warrigal have commenced the Nurse Immuniser Course through the Primary Health Network that will provide us with more options in the future to administer vaccines.

While many families are taking residents/customers out for social outings, each of these still needs to be risk assessed based on the location and the potential of unvaccinated people attending the venue. This also includes requests for residents/customers to stay overnight. We understand the importance of these requests, particularly to attend family functions or religious gatherings. Unfortunately not all can be approved if there is a risk of exposure through unvaccinated people attending the venue. In all cases, any person returning to the home will still need a Rapid Antigen Test after 3-4 days. We continue to take the temperature of all residents/customers daily.

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Thank you for taking the time to send your suggestions and comments, and your understanding of the staged approach we have taken. Please continue to provide feedback 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.

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