

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

From the desk of
**Executive
Operations**



05 MAY 2023

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

The COVID-19 indicators suggest that ongoing community transmission remains moderate to high. The number of reported cases within the community was higher in April, than in the previous months, averaging over 11,000 cases in NSW and around 630 in ACT. In view of these numbers, the current protocols that require a Rapid Antigen Test to be completed on every occasion that a visitor comes into a care home and a surgical mask to be worn, will remain in place for the next month. If a care home experiences an outbreak, these protocols will change, and the local management team will communicate these.

There are currently 408 Residential Care Homes in Australia that are currently experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak, which has increased by 218 over the month. In the past week, there have been an additional 141 outbreaks in Residential Aged Care. There are currently four active outbreaks across Warrigal which are summarised below;

Goulburn - The outbreak commenced on 25 April, and since this time, 27 residents have tested positive in 4 areas of the home, and 13 of these residents have now recovered, with 14 active cases.

Calwell - The outbreak commenced on 25 April, and since this time, 8 residents have tested positive in one area of the home, and 6 of these have now recovered.

Wollongong - This outbreak commenced on 3 May, and 4 residents have tested positive in one area of the home.

Shell Cove - The outbreak commenced on 3 May, and there are currently 2 residents that have tested positive across all four neighbourhoods within the home.

We are very fortunate that our CEO, Jenni Hutchins, was awarded a Churchill Fellowship involving extensive overseas travel commencing on 5 June 2023. There will be a strong focus on Intergenerational Activities, which are social engagements and interactions, bringing together younger and older generations where they can build on the strengths that different generations have to offer, nurturing understanding and mutual respect. We look forward to updating you on the progress of this work over the coming months.

The Order of Australia recognises Australians who have demonstrated outstanding service or exceptional achievement. Some residents in our care homes may have been recognised and have not updated their current addresses. The Chairman of the Illawarra Regional Group for the Order of Australia has indicated that they would like to ensure that any residents across Warrigal do not lose contact with the Association, and would like to meet with them regularly for social connection over morning or afternoon tea. If you are aware of anyone that the Order of Australia has recognised, please advise us by contacting the local home or through warrigal@warrigal.com.au.

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The reforms from the Aged Care Royal Commission continue to be a focus, with the imminent requirement for Registered Nurses to be working in every home 24 hours a day from 1 July 2023. Warrigal has had this in place for a while, with the only homes not currently required to have Registered Nurses on every shift being Mt Warrigal and Warrigal Multi-Cultural Village, as they were classed as “hostels”. However, with the increasing acuity of residents in these homes, it was necessary to ensure that clinical oversight was increased in these homes. We are now working towards meeting the care minutes at all homes from 1 October 2023, and welcome the announcement that the Government will be passing on the entire 15% pay increase to aged care workers, which will assist providers in attracting and retaining staff to meet the care minutes within the timeframe.

Over the course of the next month, we will be celebrating International Nurses Day on 12 May, and all of the homes will be doing something special to recognise Mother’s Day. I am conscious that it was only a few years ago that we could only do this through window visits or by using technology to connect, so it is very important that we make this a special occasion for all mothers who reside at Warrigal.

As always, I encourage you to provide us with your feedback by contacting your local management team, calling 1800 927 744 or emailing us at warrigal@warrigal.com.au.

Yours Sincerely,

Craig Smith
Executive Leader – Service Integrated Communities