

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

From the desk of
**Executive
Operations**



10 February 2023

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

We are now well into 2023, and I am pleased that over the past few weeks, the number of COVID-19 cases within the community has decreased, however, they still remain significant with 6,440 cases over the past week in NSW and 420 in ACT. The number of Residential Aged Care Homes experiencing an outbreak has reduced to 291, and fortunately there are no Warrigal homes currently in an outbreak.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the residents and relatives for complying with the protocols implemented in December when cases were increasing. While the numbers are still concerning, the protocols have been reviewed to reflect the current risk levels. These protocols will be effective from 13 February 2023.

- All staff, visitors and contractors must complete a Rapid Antigen Test within 72 hours before entering the care home.
- Surgical masks can now be worn in the home if it is not experiencing an outbreak. The latest advice from NSW and ACT Health is that masks are no longer mandatory in residential aged care but are strongly advised and recommended, and this will be the case in all of our care homes.
- Anyone going into a community/neighbourhood within a care home with positive cases must wear an N95 mask and eye protection. Other communities/neighbourhoods within the home that do not have positive cases do not require eye protection, but an N95 mask must be worn.
- Visits into a room with a COVID-positive case are still permitted, but full PPE must be worn.
- Unvaccinated visitors can now wear surgical masks.
- Visitors that are close household contacts are not allowed to enter the care home unless it is for an end of life visit.
- Weekly surveillance testing will continue to be undertaken in all care homes at least until the end of February.
- There are no longer restrictions on the number of people in a resident's room, but we would request that if you are having more than 5 people visit, arrangements should be made with the home to determine if alternative space is available.
- Residents will no longer be required to undertake routine testing for three consecutive days following an outing, however, risk assessments will be undertaken by the home to determine whether regular testing is required based on potential exposure.

Over the past month we have celebrated Chinese New Year and Australia Day with various activities across our care homes. We are currently reviewing the structure of the Lifestyle Team that coordinates these activities and will have a three-month plan developed that will capture significant national and international events, while still ensuring that the many residents who enjoy concerts and bingo will continue to participate in these activities.

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

From the desk of
**Executive
Operations**



10 February 2023

In addition to celebrating significant cultural events, it is important that we understand each resident's emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being. This includes being able to determine if residents are going on outings or having regular visitors, and one of the avenues we rely on for information is the Visitor Management System. Please continue to use this system for every visit, as it not only provides a temperature check and declaration, but assists us in meeting the needs of your loved ones.

This week the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission conducted a three-day unannounced reaccreditation audit at Queanbeyan. As I have indicated previously, these reviews look at eight different standards to ensure that residents have dignity and choice with personal care and lifestyle needs being met. We also need to demonstrate that we have mechanisms in place to capture feedback, and I would encourage you to provide us with your feedback 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 dark ink, appearing to be 'CS' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Craig Smith
Executive Leader – Service Integrated Communities