

16 December 2020

Re: Latest Update on COVID-19

Dear resident representatives and relatives

I am pleased to advise that the NSW Public Health Order has been updated, with information from the Ministry of Health being sent to aged care providers on 15 December 2020. The changes are to take effect immediately, and as a result the update is being sent out earlier this week.

The order continues with a number of the restrictions from the previous Order (number 3), including the need to be screened prior to entering the home. There has however been a number of changes, including the following;

- The restrictions on the number of visitors a resident can receive at one time has been removed, which means that residents will no longer be limited to two visitors for each visit.
- The requirement for a visitor entering the premises of a residential aged care facility to have a flu vaccination has been removed.
- Aged care providers are required to consider the advice of the Chief Health Officer in deciding the number of visitors who can enter the premises.

We are required to ensure that the number of people in a room does not exceed 2 square metres, which includes the resident, or the number of residents in a shared room. It is therefore important to continue with the existing arrangements to book appointments, and to advise of the number of people that will be visiting so that we have sufficient resources to undertake the screening and to organise a room if the numbers exceed the social distancing requirements.

It is a relief that many family members that who would not have been able to visit their friends or relatives at Christmas can now do so, but we still need to ensure the numbers in the dining room do not exceed the maximum numbers permitted. In view of the changes that become effective today, if you have previously contacted the home to make arrangements for two people to visit, and you are looking to increase these numbers, it is important to make contact with the home and advise of the changes so we can effectively manage the number of visitors.

I am pleased that there is some positive news in what has been a challenging year, where our focus and priority was on keeping everyone safe. The feedback from the relative meetings that we have held recently has been that this was understood, but there has been an emotional impact on families and while we remain prepared and ready to respond to changes in the community, we are hopeful that the current arrangements will continue for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for your support, patience and understanding as we have navigated our way through this pandemic together.

You can still call our Customer Relations Information Line on 1800 927 744, operating seven days a week between 9am to 9pm, if you have any further enquiries. You can also email us at warrigal@warrigal.com.au with any feedback you might have.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS' or similar initials, positioned above the printed name.

Craig Smith
Executive Leader - Service Integrated Communities