

11 December 2020

Re: Latest Update on COVID-19

Dear resident representatives and relatives

I am pleased to confirm that there are still currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Warrigal.

It is only two weeks until Christmas Day, and the updated arrangements that were sent last week have resulted in a number of enquiries from families to make arrangements for Christmas Day. We have had over 100 requests for residents/customers to leave the home for family gatherings which have all been approved. While our preference is for these gatherings to be outdoors or with less than 20 people if indoors, we also understand that this is not always possible, and many families will be taking the opportunity to spend some quality time with their loved ones at the end of a challenging year. At this point in time, with all of our homes being in a Tier 1 community, there will be no requirement for anyone to be isolated when they return to the care home.

We have also received a number of requests for families to come in and see their loved one on Christmas Day. It is still a requirement for anyone entering a care home to be screened, making sure that their temperature is less than 37.5 degrees Celsius, and that they are not waiting on a COVID-19 result, not been caring for anyone that is unwell and not been in any locations deemed to be higher risk areas by NSW Health. In view of this and the need to manage the number of visitors coming into the care home, it is important that if you haven't already done so, that you contact the home to schedule a time to come and visit.

It is still a requirement of the current Public Health Order that the maximum number of visitors at any one time is limited to two for each resident, and that flu vaccinations are still essential. This may change next week as the Public Health Order is due to finish on 17 December 2020, and a new one will be issued.

We continue to meet with the three Local Health Districts, and following their advice that the wearing of face masks is no longer required, this week we have made the decision that it is no longer essential for staff to wear them. This will also be the case for visitors coming to the home, who like staff, can opt to wear them, but it will be an individual choice.

The number of outdoor visits across Warrigal decreased significantly this week from 301 to 163, as many families took advantage of the changes to the visiting guidelines and stayed in the resident's rooms, with the number of visits increasing from 189 to 465 in the course of a week.

With the pending changes to the Public Health Order, it will be important to provide an update next week to clarify the requirements for any visitors coming into a care home. Unless there are any changes in the community with COVID-19, I do not anticipate that an update will be required the following week.

There are still about 70 people that receive these letters by mail, which can be delayed at this time of year. If you are receiving this by mail but would prefer to have them emailed, please contact us on 1800 927 744, or email warrigal@warrigal.com.au to update your details.

Thank you for your support, understanding and the feedback that you continue to provide through different channels.

You can 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 or for more general advice you may want to contact the Older Persons Advocacy Network on 1800 700 600.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'CS' or 'Craig Smith', is positioned above the printed name.

Craig Smith
Executive Leader - Service Integrated Communities