

5 March 2021

## COVID-19 Update

Dear resident representatives and relatives

The past week has seen the continued rollout out of the COVID-19 vaccine program with residents living in residential aged care homes in the priority 1A group, which are being coordinated by geographical areas. In the first week of the program, there were a number of homes in NSW that were advised that they were going to receive the vaccination, however, many of these had to be postponed until this week. In addition to the teams from Healthcare Australia and Aspen Medical, additional support is now being provided by Sonic Healthcare with administering the vaccinations.

We have not yet been advised of the dates for any Warrigal homes in NSW to receive the vaccination, but given the geographical hubs that have been used for the rollout, we are anticipating that many of the homes in the Shellharbour LGA will be undertaken in a short period of time. In view of this we have been progressing with obtaining as many consents as possible to be prepared for the potential of all homes receiving the vaccination over a 1-2 week period. Thank you to the large number of family members who have already provided their consent.

While we have not been advised of any homes in NSW that are scheduled for the vaccination, our second home in the ACT at Calwell has been notified that a team from Aspen Medical will be attending the home on 12 March 2021 to administer the vaccination to the residents where consent has been provided. We are fortunate that in addition to the learnings from Stirling, we have obtained feedback from other providers on their learnings from the vaccination being administered. These include;

- The resident must be able to receive the second vaccination in three weeks, which would exclude those who are leaving the care home, or some respite residents.
- Contact is made from the team administering the vaccinations the previous evening to ensure that there is an area designated for the vaccinations and another smaller room to store the vaccinations. Only those residents that are not able to leave their bed will be vaccinated in their room.
- Additional staff will be utilised for monitoring the residents.
- There have been no adverse clinical reactions reported.
- The small number of surplus vaccinations would be prioritised with the vaccination team initially and then the staff.

The number of visitors coming into the care homes continues to increase with 948 visits occurring last week, including 121 outside visits with families enjoying the warm weather. At this stage we will continue to have staff complete the screening of people coming into the home, however, this will be reviewed once all of the homes have received the vaccine.

The dates have now been set for the relative Zoom meetings that will be commencing on 16 March 2021 for the Bundanoon Care Home. We will be sending out further information on how to join these meetings in the coming weeks, where we can provide you with updates and address any questions or feedback that you would like to provide. These meetings were a commitment that we made last year following your feedback that they were valuable and would like them to continue.

Finally, while these updates are primarily to keep you updated on COVID-19 related issues, it would be remiss of me not to mention the Aged Care Royal Commission recommendations that were released last Friday. The report recommends a complete overhaul to the aged care system, with a focus on quality, flexibility and consumer control. While a response from the Government to the recommendations is not required until the end of May, we embrace the findings and have commenced a process of reviewing the recommendations to be prepared for their implementation.

Please do not hesitate to contact Warrigal by email at [warrigal@warrigal.com.au](mailto:warrigal@warrigal.com.au) with any feedback you might have or by calling our information line on Customer Relations Information Line on 1800 927 744.

Yours Sincerely,



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