

12 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. As at 10 March 2021, the total number of vaccinations delivered by the teams engaged by the Commonwealth to administer the vaccination was over 31,000 across 355 aged care homes. This represents about 17.5% of the total number required to be administered in aged care homes.

We received advice this week, that our home in Queanbeyan will receive the first vaccination on 30 March 2021, and the second dose on 20 April 2021, while our second home in the ACT at Calwell is receiving the first dose of the COVID vaccination today. The biggest logistical challenge has been getting the consents organised prior to the date of the vaccination, and I have attached the consent form for your information only. The second page of the consent form needs to be completed prior to the day of the vaccination, which will be undertaken by our clinical staff. This will be validated with you when you are contacted for the consent to proceed with the vaccination and the third page will need to be signed. Our staff will arrange this with you in either the care home or over the phone as we continue to prepare all for the possibility of short notice being provided.

At the moment the only restriction in place for visiting residents in the care home is that they still need to be coordinated through the respective staff in the home, due to the need to ensure screening is undertaken. The number of visits each week continues to increase and last week there over 1000 visits to residents, with 185 of them taking place outdoors. It has now been over 12 months since the requirement for visitors and staff to be screened was implemented, and this has been a major reason why we have been able to closely monitor who is coming into the home and preventing not only a COVID-19 outbreak, but a significant reduction from previous years with other outbreaks including influenza. While screening will continue, once the vaccination has been administered, the restrictions on having to schedule visits will be removed and visitors will be able to screen themselves when entering the care home.

The Zoom meetings with relatives will commence next week and will be a great opportunity for us to provide an update on what is happening in the industry, COVID-19 vaccinations and respond to any questions you may have. We will also be asking for feedback from you on the value of the communications that you receive and the preferred frequency of these communications. The invitations will be sent a week before the scheduled date of the Zoom meeting.

One of the industry changes that will be discussed at the upcoming meetings will be the introduction of the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) that will come into effect from 1 April 2021. It is a government initiative to help reduce the risk of abuse and neglect in residential care, and sets out new

arrangements to manage and take reasonable action to prevent incidents in our care homes with a focus on the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of our residents. We will also be required to report a broader range of incidents to the Commission than our previous arrangements. Incidents must be reported within set timeframes depending on the level of impact to the resident. This will potentially mean that you will be contacted more frequently regarding incidents that have occurred and actions that have been implemented to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future where appropriate.

I am looking forward to seeing a number of you in the upcoming meetings, and if you have not yet responded to the invitation to attend the meetings, please take the opportunity to attend and provide us with your feedback.

Please do not hesitate to contact Warrigal by email at 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