

6 November 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.

The past week has seen the number of cases in NSW from community transmissions reduce, however, with the rapid increase in cases overseas, the number of positive cases in hotel quarantine has increased significantly. On Thursday this week all Residential Care Providers were issued advice from the Ministry of Health advising of the need to maintain vigilance because COVID-19 is still circulating in some areas of Sydney. This was particularly relevant for Warrigal in the South West Sydney Local Health District where this morning we became aware of a possible outbreak at Moss Vale Public School which has been closed for cleaning pending the outcome of the COVID-19 test.

In response to this, any staff member or contractor at Bundanoon that has a child attending the school was advised not to attend the workplace. It has subsequently been confirmed that there are four positive cases linked to Moss Vale Public School, including the parents, and as a result we have taken the decision to stop all scheduled visits on the weekend and Monday from coming into our home at Bundanoon, with the exception of compassionate visits to residents who are at end of life. The relatives of all the residents impacted by this will be contacted advising of the action that has been taken while we wait for further advice from the Ministry of Health, and a further update will be provided next week.

The number of outdoor visits continues to be a preferred way of meeting with residents/customers, however the overall numbers decreased in the past week with only 182 visits, with a further 26 residents/customers leaving the home for a social visit. The overall number of visits was consistent with past weeks, however, some preferred visits in the Safe Visiting Areas due to the weather conditions. We will continue to monitor all of the areas considered a risk of COVID-19 entering a care home, including visits by GPs and Allied Health Professionals who must also be screened.

NSW Health and the Commonwealth Department of Health have formalised the coordination of Government support to residential aged care providers in the management of a COVID-19 outbreak. The support includes the provision of training from the Clinical Excellence Commission on best practice with Infection Control, and Warrigal has nominated two staff to attend this training next week. The Local Health Districts have also arranged a Train the Trainer program on Infection Control, and we will have representatives from all of our homes attending this training.

Next week we have three Zoom meetings scheduled for relatives from Albion Park Rail, Coniston and Goulburn. These meetings will be attended by the Residential Services Manager of the home, our Clinical Advisor, Catherine Shands, the CEO, Mark Sewell and myself. There have been a number of relatives who have accepted the invitation, and further reminders will be sent to encourage you to attend which is a great opportunity for you to not only provide us with your feedback but also for Warrigal to prepare for how Zoom meetings would be used if an outbreak occurred.

Thank you to the families that have made contact with the respective management teams in the care homes regarding their intentions for the Christmas period. We have seen today how quickly things can change, however, if you are looking at taking your loved one home for Christmas, could you please advise the local management team so that we can plan for the festive season.

The bus outings have continued in the past week, with 125 residents leaving the home for these social trips. The numbers continue to be restricted so that social distancing requirements can be followed, however, this will be reviewed in the coming weeks, particularly for residents/customers that live in the same neighbourhoods.

I will continue to keep you updated regularly and again, thank you for your support, which is communicated through our social media and emails sent each week.

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,



Craig Smith
Executive Leader - Service Integrated Communities