

26 June 2020

## Re: Latest Update on COVID-19

Dear resident representatives and relatives

It has been an interesting week as the second phase of COVID-19 has impacted on a number of areas in Victoria, while other States continue to relax restrictions but continue to remain very cautious. There are still no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Warrigal, but we continue to remain vigilant with our screening and testing, and in the past week eight staff were tested and the checklist that is used for anyone entering an aged care home has been amended to include a question on whether the person has been to Victoria.

The COVID-19 Working Party at Warrigal continues to meet on a weekly basis to review our current position and the need to update our policies to reflect changes in constantly changing public policy. This week the NSW Public Health Order was amended and one of the changes was that children under the age of 16 are now allowed to enter a Residential Care Home. It is still a requirement for anyone entering a home to have evidence of a recent flu vaccination, and the maximum number of visitors at any one time remains at two people. This also applies to anyone entering a Care Home for a compassionate visit or to spend time with a loved one who is receiving palliative care. NSW Health has also advised us to prohibit anyone entering a care home if they have been to Melbourne in the prior 14 days. We hope this doesn't inconvenience too many of you but it is the law under NSW emergency powers due to the pandemic.

The survey to obtain feedback from our residents on the current restrictions and areas for improvement will finish this week, and we have received 239 responses, with feedback from all homes. The most overwhelming feedback continues to be that residents continue to feel safe, with 99% confirming that even in the current crisis environment, they feel safe at Warrigal. We have had to amend the manner in which activities are delivered to comply with social distancing requirements, and it is pleasing that 94% of our residents are satisfied with the current temporary arrangements. The new Safe Visiting Areas that we have constructed continue to provide an environment for families to meet on a regular basis, but 11% of residents have advised that they are not happy with these areas. We have received additional feedback on the reasons, which primarily relate to not being able to communicate clearly, which we are looking at improving as soon as we can.

This week we held a meeting with the Liverpool Public Health Unit, to discuss the support they would be able to provide in the event of an outbreak at our Bundanoon Care Home. We have now held meetings with all of the Local Health Districts that cover all of our Residential Care Homes, and we will continue to maintain communication with them and update them on the actions we have taken, and the support that we will require in an emergency like they are having in Melbourne.

We have also developed a Rapid Response Team, with an action plan that would be implemented with clear roles and responsibilities for all members of the team. This plan will be tested in the coming weeks, and while we hope it won't be required, we continue to plan and be prepared for the second wave of the virus should it happen in NSW.

Finally, thank you for the emails and messages of feedback that many of you have sent, in understanding that our priority continues to be ensuring the safety of the residents and customers that live at Warrigal. The current arrangements will remain in place but will continue to be reviewed and adjusted as things change each month.

I will continue to keep you updated regularly and again, thank you for your continued support and understanding. If you have any further enquiries, please call our Customer Relations Information Line on 1800 927 744, now operating seven days a week between 9am to 9pm. You can also email us at [warrigal@warrigal.com.au](mailto:warrigal@warrigal.com.au) or alternatively for more general COVID19 advice please contact the 24-hour National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

Yours Sincerely,



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