

30 December 2020

Re: Latest Update on COVID-19

Dear resident representatives and relatives

I hope that you all had a happy and safe Christmas, and were able to spend some time with your loved ones over the festive season. Unfortunately, the spread of COVID-19 positive cases has now resulted in Wollongong recording two positive cases, with NSW Health Alerts being issued for anyone that may have been at Figtree Grove or Wollongong Central in the week leading up to Christmas.

Warrigal has been working closely with the Public Health Unit and is aware that a number of residents have had contact with someone who has been in casual contact with one of the positive cases in Wollongong. These residents are currently in isolation, while we wait on the results of the COVID-19 tests for their contacts. One has already come back negative, but the Public Health Unit have requested a second test be undertaken.

The Ministry of Health has issued advice this morning that all homes in the Wollongong Council Area must exclude all visitors, except those performing essential caring functions from entering a residential care home until 11.59pm on 6 January 2021.

In view of the close proximity between the Shellharbour LGA and Wollongong LGA, which has been evidenced by the two residents currently in isolation in homes outside of Wollongong, in consultation with the Public Health Unit, Warrigal will be applying the same restrictions to all care homes covered by the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

This will mean that effective immediately, only visitors that are providing essential care services in the Wollongong and Shellharbour LGAs will be permitted to visit wearing face masks. No visitors from the extended Greater Sydney Area will be allowed to visit anyone in any regional residential care homes.

Our screening tools have been updated to reflect all of the current "hotspots" within the Wollongong area, and any staff or visitors providing essential care services, will not be allowed into the care home if they have been at any of the venues on the day that it was visited by a COVID-19 positive case.

If you have been approved previously for a compassionate visit, please confirm with the local home that this still meets the criteria for providing essential care services. These restrictions are temporary and apply until Wednesday 6 January 2021, and a further update will be provided on this date, or sooner if there is a change in the community transmissions.

I understand this is not the ideal way to end the year, and I apologise for this, but we have to ensure that safety is our priority, and please do not visit if you have any symptoms or are feeling unwell.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Craig Smith
Executive Leader - Service Integrated Communities