

Friday 13 March 2020

Dear Residents and Visitors

I would like to provide you with an update on COVID-19 (also known as novel coronavirus).

We are writing to seek your help in protecting those older people who are being cared for in our residential aged care facilities.

As part of our plan to reduce and contain any risk of COVID-19, we are requesting that people do not visit our aged care facility or hospital if they are unwell (particularly with fever or respiratory symptoms). This is because older people appear to be at risk of both contracting COVID-19, and having a serious illness as a result.

We have a plan in place to reduce the risk of residents in aged care being exposed to COVID-19 and the following actions have been taken to minimise the risk to residents:

- Monitoring staff for respiratory illness;
- Managing staff returning to work from holidays overseas;
- Closely monitoring residents for signs and symptoms of COVID-19;
- Reviewing and activating our infection control plan; and
- Actively promoting good hand hygiene and good cough etiquette among our staff, residents and visitors.

Staff are well informed of how to manage a resident who is unwell with a respiratory illness.

COVID-19 is spread through close contact with someone who has the virus, contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze, and touching surfaces that have droplets from an infected person such as a door handle. Symptoms from COVID-19 may include any of: a runny nose, fever, cough or shortness of breath.

Key to containing the spread of this virus, I would like to remind you to practice good personal hygiene; please wash your hands regularly and use hand hygiene solution as you move through our facilities when you are visiting your loved one or friend.

If any residents are diagnosed with COVID-19, they will need to be isolated and measures put in place to restrict visitors, contractors and non-essential staff from entering the aged care facility, in order to minimise the spread of infection and protect our vulnerable residents. Health care and residential care workers will continue to provide support and care while the resident is isolated.

If you have any queries or concerns, please raise them with the facility manager or nurse unit manager at your aged care residence.

Further information about how you can protect yourself and your family from COVID-19 is available by visiting the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website

www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

The Commonwealth Department of Health also have information for residential aged care residents, families and visitors that can be found here:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-residents-of-residential-care-services-family-members-and-visitors>

Yours Sincerely,

Wintringham Site Manager