

Dear Residents and Resident Key  
Contacts

### COVID

Whilst COVID has subsided significantly in the community there are still cases around and unfortunately, we are still seeing COVID cases in our aged care homes.

It is still a dangerous infection that can lead to terrible health outcomes for older people.

I am seeking your assistance to maintain vigilance to assist us to continue to keep you and your family members safe by adhering to the following:

- Visitors are still requested to complete the declaration form on entry to every Eldercare home every time you visit. These have been recently updated to make them more streamlined.
- You are not permitted to enter any Eldercare aged care home if you have any COVID or other flu or respiratory symptoms or are waiting for a PCR test result.
- You cannot enter any of our aged care homes if you have been a close contact or household contact of a positive COVID case in the previous 7 days (yes, close contacts are still relevant for vulnerable people).
- You cannot enter any of our aged care homes if you have had a COVID positive test result yourself – for 7 days post positive test.
- If you have had COVID and your 7 days have been completed, you can only enter an Eldercare aged care home but only if you have been free of symptoms for at least 24 hours.
- Visitors are requested to undertake a RAT test prior to entry to the home to visit (within 48hrs prior to visit).
- RAT test kits are being issued to visitors by our administration staff based at our homes during business hours, upon request.
- Be careful when socializing outside of the aged care home – stay away from crowded places if possible and keep away from anyone who has flu or COVID



(L – R): Operational Services Executive Anne-Marie Gillard, Chief Executive Jane Pickering, and Corporate Services Executive Scott Morgan

symptoms (many of our positive COVID cases come from residents going on outings and being exposed to COVID outside of the aged care home).

- Please get vaccinated with the 2023 booster if you are eligible. Residents or your key contact can speak with your Clinical Leader or Clinical Care Manager at your site to discuss the best way to get vaccinated. We are still holding clinics at our sites. GPs and community pharmacies can provide vaccinations for visitors and key contacts.
- Washing hands is still one of the best defenses against the spread of COVID, please continue to wash your hands at every opportunity!

Today, Acacia Court at Hendon is our only site with positive residents.

Every Eldercare employee is vaccinated against COVID, staff are still monitored very closely for symptoms and must complete a RAT test every 48 hours.

## **Seasonal Influenza**

The Seasonal Influenza is about to hit us again so please get your vaccination for the 2023 seasonal influenza and do not visit if you have flu symptoms.

In accordance with Eldercare policy, every employee is vaccinated against the seasonal influenza.

## **Consumer Experience and Quality of Life survey**

Thank you to all resident and resident representatives who completed the first Consumer Experience and Quality of Life survey for the Quality Indicator Program in May 2023.

We had an approximate 70% response rate for the survey, a fantastic result. We are in the process of collating and analysing the results in preparation for reporting the summarised data to the Department of Health and Aged Care (Department) later in July 2023.

Once we have reported the data and gained access to any benchmark data made available to us by the Department, we will use the data to improve areas of consumer engagement and quality of life for our residents.

As previously communicated, the surveys will be conducted by Eldercare each quarter. The survey includes six questions on consumer engagement and six questions on quality of life and has been designed by Flinders University.

Participation is not compulsory but is encouraged, as the more responses received the more representative the data.

Only summarised survey response data will be provided to the Department and all responses are confidential.

The next round of surveys will commence the week of **14 August 2023**, and we will use a similar process to conduct the surveys, led by the Lifestyle Team at each site. They will:

- Deliver the surveys to each resident who can complete the survey themselves.
- Give assistance to residents who need support to complete the surveys.
- If a resident cannot complete the surveys in these ways, it will be forwarded to their primary contact by email. The email will include a link to an electronic version of the surveys which should take 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you in advance for your participation in these ongoing surveys.

## **New Spiritual Care Approach**

We are excited to let you know more about Eldercare's new Spiritual Care Approach and that you will be noticing some changes over the next months.

At Eldercare, we recognise that spiritual care is a basic human right and all older people receiving care should have access to effective spiritual care in a way that is meaningful to them.

You may have engaged with Eldercare's chaplains during your time with us and benefited from their support.

Over the next month, you will notice that Chaplains will have an updated role name to Spiritual Care Practitioner. While this might take some getting used to for residents, families and staff, this name change will not take away from the chaplaincy role but will provide opportunities for residents and families to understand spiritual care as inclusive, professional, and not purely defined by religious care.

The spiritual care team will continue providing spiritual and pastoral care support.

We are excited to introduce several new Spiritual Care Practitioners, who have commenced working with Eldercare. The Spiritual Care Practitioners are keen to meet you and your loved ones. We hope that our inclusive Spiritual Care Approach will give you the opportunity to articulate and express your most important connections and how the Eldercare team can support you.

## **New Rosters**

We are in the process of recruiting more staff to enable us to introduce our new enhanced rosters at all sites, commencing in late September 2023. This is in response to the new legislative requirements for additional minutes of care per resident per day. You will see some new faces around and I am sure that you will welcome our new employees and assist them to settle into Eldercare so they can provide you with high quality care.

## **Pay Increase for Employees**

Eldercare was incredibly pleased that we were able to pass on a significant pay increase to all our staff this month. We have been lobbying the Government for additional funding so we can pay our staff more, and I am pleased that this did occur. I am sure you will agree with me that our staff deserve to be paid well for the incredible work that they do.

## **Thankyou**

I take this opportunity to thank you all for being supportive of Eldercare and our staff. I also thank the vast majority of you for treating our staff with respect. I have had a request from a few of our homes' managers to respectfully request you not to interrupt the nurses when they are doing the medication rounds. They need to concentrate, and interruptions can lead to mistakes – which of course we do not want.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards

Jane Pickering – Chief Executive