

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

COVID-19 Update to Residents and Key Contacts 20 January 2023

Dear Residents and Resident Key Contacts

Happy New Year to all Residents and your key contacts, family members and friends. I am sure you will be hoping, as I am, that 2023 will be a calmer and less stressful year for us all!

Visiting

I am pleased to inform you that we will be relaxing our visiting requirements as from Monday next week (23 January). Visits can now also occur in our lounge/dining and activity areas at all sites as well as in resident rooms.

If visitors meet the requirements outlined in the declaration forms at each aged care home, then there are no restrictions to the time of visiting, length of visit or number of visitors. This includes weekends and public holidays.

The other specific requirements that remain in place for visitors to help keep our residents safe are:

- Visitors are requested to undertake a RAT test prior to entry to the home to visit (within 48hrs prior to visit).
- To speed up the entry process please do your RAT test at home prior to arriving at the aged care home.
- RAT test kits are being issued to visitors by our administration staff based at our homes during business hours, upon request.
- Each visitor must complete a separate declaration form (not multiple visitors information on one form).

When we have COVID outbreaks we will still be required to restrict visiting as necessary.

We will continue to contain the restrictions to discreet areas or rooms wherever possible during COVID outbreaks to minimise the impact on residents and their visitors who have not been exposed to COVID.



Other Ongoing Visiting Requirements

Some other restrictions for visitors will continue. The following still applies to all visitors entering an Eldercare aged care home:

- Visitors are still required to complete the declaration form on entry to every Eldercare home.
- You will not be 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.
- 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 has been completed, you can only enter an Eldercare aged care home if you have been free of symptoms for at least 24 hours.

Visiting Choirs, entertainers, and intergenerational group visits

I am also pleased to let you all know that we will be reinstating the visits from external choir groups, entertainment groups and the intergenerational (children from schools, kindergartens, and childcare) groups to our homes.

The adult visitors will need to RAT test prior to entry and we will not allow anyone to come into our homes who have COVID symptoms or have been close contacts as per the conditions listed above.

We will also be ensuring that the visits are conducted safely and that we limit the possible exposure of COVID to our residents.

I am sure that everyone will enjoy having the chatter and laughter of groups of children back in our homes.

Masks

Our employees, visitors, volunteers, and contractors are **no longer required** to wear masks upon entering an aged care home unless there are COVID cases or residents with symptoms.

We will still require masks to be worn if residents have any respiratory symptoms or we have any positive COVID cases in accordance with our infection control guidelines. Visitors will be informed, prior to entry, of the requirement to wear masks by the local managers if this is necessary. Eldercare will continue to provide surgical masks and other PPE as appropriate.



COVID situation

We do not have any positive resident cases at any of our aged care homes today. We have only a few positive employees, all of whom are isolating away from work.

COVID-19 Email

We have set up a special email address for any queries regarding COVID. The email address is:

COVID@eldercare.net.au

The emails will be checked daily, Monday to Friday, and responses provided as soon as possible.

Acquisition of a New Aged Care Home at Hope Valley

On a non-COVID related matter, Eldercare has acquired another aged care home in Hope Valley. The home was formerly named Ananda, but it will be known as Eldercare Hope Valley as from Monday, 23 January, when we take over the home.

We have been going through the transition from the previous owners over the past few months and we are pleased to be taking full control of the site as from Monday next week. It gives Eldercare a presence in the North-eastern suburbs which we have not had previously. It will be operated as a 101-bed aged care home. The home will be undergoing a significant refurbishment program over the next 12 months.

Please share this information

Please share this information with family members or friends who visit an Eldercare home.

Kind Regards

Jane Pickering
Chief Executive

