



2 July 2020

## Coronavirus Update #17

### Greetings from the CEO

Well, what a time it has been...2020 has certainly challenged us like never before and yet we are still smiling and enjoying life in new ways, both within Maroba and in our own homes.

We are half way through the year already and we are still being consumed with news of Covid-19. Who would have guessed that? I know when you wake up in the morning and as the day progresses there is so much news, local and international to catch up on and the last thing you may want to read, especially with this being our 17<sup>th</sup> update, is news from Maroba however it is important that you stick with us and keep up to date.

Why? ... Sadly we are seeing higher Covid-19 case numbers each day in Victoria...the ABC reported recently that a small number of new cases in Melbourne were contracted via security guards working at a hotel housing returning travellers in quarantine. This shows this virus is certainly contagious and a stark reminder of how important social distancing and practicing good hand hygiene is, not only for those working in aged care but for everyone. With visitors now entering our facility and us not knowing where anybody has been, this scenario could so easily play out here. As advised recently, no visitor who has been to Victoria or been in contact with someone from Victoria is currently able to enter Maroba, and there is good reason for this.

Here is a paragraph from the Australian Government, Department of Health, Fact Sheet 'Families and residents on restricted visits to residential aged care facilities' and a reminder for us all of the vulnerability of the older population.

#### **'Why is this virus so dangerous for older people?**

The risk of serious illness from Covid-19 increases with age. The highest rate of fatalities is among older people. The rate is higher for those with other serious health conditions or a weakened immune system. There is currently no cure or vaccine for Covid-19.

For people living with dementia or some form of cognitive impairment it may be difficult to:

- Follow instructions to reduce their risk of getting Covid-19, or
- Alert others about potential symptoms.

This is especially so where there is a limited capacity to communicate verbally or express pain and discomfort.

To protect older Australians and those with weakened immune systems from Covid-19 we all need to work together.'



So far I have been able to report that we have had no cases of Covid-19 at Maroba and I would like to continue to be able to say that.

However, we are acutely aware of the Victoria situation and are monitoring it closely. The school holidays are on our doorstep and already plane loads of visitors are arriving from Victoria.

**Please be aware if there is a reported community transmission in the Hunter, visitation to Maroba will change and it will change quickly. In addition, all previously approved excursions will be reviewed.**

If this happens, we are not sure what the visitation arrangements will look like, however if you haven't visited your loved one recently and would like to, please take the opportunity to do so soon, as we don't know what will happen with visitation arrangements in the future.

As a reminder, visitation without appointments is Monday to Friday, 10-4.30pm. If you are genuinely not able to visit during office hours please ring Reception, and for exceptional circumstances we will endeavour to arrange another time.

On another note, we had three incidents last week where visitors arrived at Maroba claiming to have been vaccinated but when prodded further no evidence could be produced. Without proof you will not get past the gatekeeper. This is a Public health Order not Maroba's. This applies to everyone including children. Please ensure that all family and friends are aware of this directive. One visiting group had travelled from Sydney and had to be turned away, which is not a pleasant conversation for them or for us!

Let's keep up the great work; practice good hand hygiene, don't congregate in our communal areas and practice social distancing here and in the community.

Until next time...

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Viv' followed by a simple line drawing of a smiling face with eyes and a mouth.

Viv Allanson, CEO Maroba