



17 July 2020

URGENT UPDATE FROM OUR CEO

Coronavirus Update #21

Things in the Covid -19 realm are moving very rapidly now with over 39 Victorian Aged Care facilities impacted and now Sydney Aged Care facilities are also affected as large numbers of their staff are being stood down for isolation purposes. Whilst we can only hope that the escalation within the state does not take on the scale of Victoria we are on a knife edge as our leaders make the economy the ultimate priority rather than preventing the spread of the Pandemic, particularly as it impacts those that are more vulnerable amongst us.

Maroba does not have any recorded cases of Covid-19, however we are managing an outbreak of Picornavirus within the Waratah care unit and Isolation Unit. This is being reviewed on a daily basis, and remains in lockdown unless special compassionate arrangements are offered.

Whilst the numbers of known cases in the Hunter remain contained, it is the importing of this virus from known hotspots that is of greatest concern. For instance we have heard that people from known hotspots travelled from Sydney to our local Health facilities for testing to save themselves the inconvenience of waiting all day for a Covid test. We continue to keep abreast of the daily information and respond accordingly.

I am pleased to announce I have met with both Manor and Lodge residents this morning to update them of the rapidly changing Pandemic situation and the option of further restricting our visiting arrangements. All residents present voted in favour of the following arrangements.

Visitation arrangements will now be managed differently by returning to booked Screen visits:

1. Please phone reception 49350300 during office hours to make an appointment **for up to 2 people** between 10am- 4pm Monday – Friday. **½ hour visits** only to ensure as many families as possible can get a booking. Please allow enough time to be screened prior to your scheduled visit. We will do our best to work with your loved one to have them ready for your visit.
2. If you **genuinely** cannot visit during these specified hours a screen visit maybe arranged by limited appointment only via reception during office hours. Do NOT turn up hoping to drop in...you will be turned away.
3. In room extended support visits will continue as per previous arrangements with the nominated family member. **These visits will be scheduled and are limited to 1-2 hours Monday – Friday.** Less is better if possible unless a special arrangement has been offered. Maroba will be in touch with these families to confirm arrangements.
4. Compassionate visits will be facilitated if your loved one has experienced a sudden deterioration in their condition or is requiring end of life care.
5. Family outings or social leave are no longer possible at this time.

6. Medical appointments will continue with the ideal option being Telehealth. Alternatively the first appointment of the day should be arranged. **We are no longer able to provide escorts** therefore it is up to families to accompany residents in your private vehicle where possible. If a disabled taxi is required wipe down and social distancing rules must apply. Please liaise with Manju John if you need clarification or further assistance.
7. No general visiting permitted in the Waratah care unit and Isolation Unit or screen visits with those residents until further notice.

NB. All these arrangements are dependent on where visitors have travelled to and from as exclusion zones are in place. E.g. Victoria, Greater Sydney and South Coast. We anticipate an expansion of these zones as the virus spreads within NSW over the coming days and weeks.

Please do not reject the advice of staff as this will be escalated to the Covid team and further restrictions may be implemented.

If you are visiting remember the 3 keys to basic personal protection remain:

- Social distancing remains 1.5 metres apart from others especially the person you are visiting;
- Hand washing with soap and water regularly and as necessary;
- Cough & sneeze etiquette whilst staying away from others, if experiencing any symptoms at all;
- If you have symptoms get tested immediately and do not visit.

Please remember to pass on the visitation amendments in this update to family and friends who may wish to visit Maroba. In particular, remind them of the requirement to have available evidence of their **influenza vaccination**.

Please be aware, that at short notice I may change these arrangements depending on emerging circumstances.

Stay safe and be vigilant.

Yours sincerely,



Viv Allanson, CEO