

21 September 2021

## Coronavirus Update #66

Greetings to our Maroba Community,

I hope you have been enjoying the sunshine of late, and how wonderful that with 5 fully vaccinated people we could have a picnic on the weekend! Who would have thought we could get excited about having a picnic. I am not sure I will take this recreational opportunity for granted again.

Pleasingly and in line with the easing of restrictions in the community we have been able to ease some restrictions at Maroba. Residents are now able to socialise in suburbs, in small groups in The Junction Café as well as attend the gym and go for walks in the grounds (weather permitting) on a suburb by suburb basis. This week we commenced our weekly outside BBQs, and every suburb over the coming weeks will be offered the option of a BBQ lunch outside. We anticipate being able to take our residents out on bus trips in the coming weeks with refreshments and drinks on board. (ie. There will be no stopping at a lunch venue).

We are conscious that in the next month restrictions should be eased considerably in the community. Unfortunately, at this stage we have not been advised of any details as to what this will mean for aged care but we will inform you as soon as we receive this advice. Currently as per NSW Health guidelines aged care facilities are not able to allow visitation in stay at home areas, which of course includes Newcastle. We must all stay within our LGA and unless for essential reasons (as defined on the Service NSW webpage - <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/rules/affected-regions> ) not travel more than 5 km away from home.

There has however been a slight change to the NSW Health directive for residents living within stay at home regions which came into effect from 13 September.

*Residents are permitted to leave the facility to exercise (go for a walk) provided they;*

- *remain within 1km of the facility*
- *do not interact with other people outside of the facility*
- *wear a facemask or carry a medical certificate or other written evidence signed by a registered health practitioner or a statutory declaration by the person saying they have a physical or mental health illness or condition which prohibits them from wearing a facemask*
- *are risk assessed by the facility that they are capable of undertaking exercise in a COVID safe way*

*Otherwise*

- *Residents should not leave the facility except for essential reasons (e.g. medical appointments).*
- *Facilities must ensure that residents are provided with appropriate PPE and infection control advice if they need to leave the facility for essential purposes.*

As advised above, weather permitting residents are able to access the grounds on a suburb by suburb basis for walks, fresh air and sunshine.

As always we will facilitate compassionate visits for residents who are palliating and these will be arranged by the Director of Care, Linda Winn and or the Clinical Care Partner, Janet Wright.

If you would like to read up on the current advice from NSW Health for residential aged care facilities please visit the following website.

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/racf-latest-advice.aspx>

We know it is difficult not being able to see your loved one here at Maroba. Many staff are also affected by these stay at home orders and are not able to see their family members at this time. We all really feel for everyone at this difficult and challenging time.

When we are allowed visitors, we anticipate we will be required to see proof of a Covid vaccine, like we did in 2020 for the influenza vaccine. So we are ready to push the 'go' button on visitation, if you have received both Covid vaccines could you please forward a copy of the certificate to us at your earliest convenience. The Covid vaccination certificate can be emailed to [enquiries@maroba.com.au](mailto:enquiries@maroba.com.au). For those who are not inclined to receive a vaccine or are not medically able to be vaccinated then we will await further advice from NSW Health as to how we can facilitate visitation when that time comes.

On another note, don't forget Daylight Saving, we put our clocks forward 1 hour on Sunday 3 October and we hope to distribute the October edition of the Maroba Connect early next week.

Remember we have Zoom and FaceTime available for connection and although not quite the same it is the best we can do at this time. We know our residents miss you too and appreciate the connection so, please stay safe and connected.

Regards



Louise Adnum

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