

1 March 2022

Good afternoon, family members and friends,

Key Points - social news, medical appointments, flu vaccinations, visiting arrangements, request for volunteers.

We hope you are all keeping safe and are enjoying the relaxation of covid restrictions in the community.

It has been lovely to see our residents receive visitors. They have missed everyone, and we are pleased that we are able to resume visitation again albeit in a modified form. Remember though, even though restrictions have eased considerably in the community they haven't at all for aged care facilities and other vulnerable communities. Aged care facilities still have restrictions in place as recommended by NSW Health. We are required to manage the risk of COVID, which is still circulating in high numbers in the local community, therefore there is the minor inconvenience of proof of a negative RAT test prior to each visit and booked appointments. This is very minor when you consider the alternative if COVID creeps into the facility and we are directed to return to lockdown. RAT testing of staff prior to each shift has proven very successful so far in identifying positive cases before shift commencement and we will be continuing this procedure for the foreseeable future. Thank you to everyone for doing your 'bit' too! We know that it is not a cheap exercise but so worth it in keeping our community safe. Don't forget you may be eligible for a free supply of test kits as per recent Government announcement. Check via the link below:

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/get-free-rapid-antigen-tests-rats-if-you-hold-concession-card>

I am sorry to say, I am hearing reports from our Volunteer Concierge teams that the attitude and rudeness of some of our visitors is forcing them to reconsider their willingness to Volunteer in this Role. Whilst the majority of our visitors have been extremely polite and accepting of our visitation arrangements, we have had a handful of visitors recently who have been rude and argumentative to our staff and volunteers. Not having checked on what is required before visiting any aged care service is not a valid reason to take out frustration on our Volunteers. Remember, our volunteers are vital to Maroba in being able to offer and manage our current visitation arrangements in accordance with NSW Health. If we do not have volunteers, then we will not be able to facilitate our current visitation arrangements, and that will not help anyone. Our staff are also vital in providing appropriate care and service to your loved one. If they are taken away from that focus to manage visitation then your loved one misses out. Please be prepared and informed when visiting Maroba and ensure other family members and your loved one's friends are informed of our requirements as I have instructed our Volunteers to turn people away if they are not co-operating, are

argumentative or demand exemption from RAT. If you are not happy with any of our arrangements, we have various mechanisms for providing feedback such as our dedicated feedback@maroba.com.au email address or you can complete a form under 'Contact Us' on our website. Alternatively, you can contact Seniors Rights on 1800 424 079 or OPAN on 1800 700 600 both advocacy organisations.

Social news

To more positive news, as advised previously bus trips have re-commenced and as of next week residents will be able to attend appropriate covid safe venues whilst out and about and or enjoy some fish and chips in the park.

Concerts are back on and residents will be able to socialise with others on the same floor and attend the gym and or beauty salon together with their 'floor buddies'.

Residents may leave the facility and attend family gatherings or for other reasons but must abide by the current legislation; Public Health (Covid-19 General) Order (No 2) 2021.

https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/file/Public%20Health%20%28COVID-19%20General%29%20Order%20%28No%20%29%202021_220112.pdf

A reminder about **excursions**, please complete the on-line form at least **48 hours prior** to the excursion date. Please don't complete the form at 7pm the night before the excursion as you will be disappointed the next day if you're loved one is not ready on time and you are late for your function or appointment.

Medical appointments

Due to staffing challenges, it is **not possible** for us to provide any escorts to accompany residents to medical appointments. If an escort is required families will need to arrange this along with completing the Day Excursion Form as per above. If you are not available to attend the appointment it is up to family members to reschedule to a more suitable time.

Flu vaccination

It is nearing flu season again and we will be ordering our flu vaccines shortly. This is also the time that we are required to obtain consent from family members to administer the flu vaccine. If you would normally sign consent for your loved one, please visit our website and complete the Influenza Consent form found under Forms.

Covid Vaccination

If your loved one is yet to have their vaccine booster (Third dose), please ensure that if you normally sign for clinical matters that the relevant consent form is signed. As soon as we can secure the required doses for those residents, a clinic will be scheduled. If **there is no consent a Vaccine will not be offered**. Please note Maroba does not get to pick and choose which Vaccine will be available, so if you are seeking a specific Vaccine for your loved one please

make your own arrangements to vaccinate your loved one where you can get such a supply. Proof of Vaccine will need to be provided for the resident's care records.

Re-cap of visiting arrangements.

- Visiting is possible via appointments, Monday to Friday from 10-4pm
- Bookings can be made via Reception during business hours
- Unless directed otherwise, visits except for Waratah residents are outside in designated areas for **30 minutes** per visit.
- Visiting for residents of Waratah will be in room only, also for 30 minutes.
- When visiting remember you are required as per the Public Health Order to be double vaccinated and there is the additional requirement of a negative RAT test on the day of the visit.
- Visitors are to wear N95 masks supplied by Maroba.
- Only 2 visitors for up to 30 minutes, no children under 12 years can visit at this time.
- If your loved one leaves the facility for social or a medical excursion, we are required to carry out a testing regime post outing, so that we can monitor your loved one for Covid -19 if they leave the facility. Residents who do not return the same day **should be isolated** until they have a negative PCR, (RAT if delays in PCR processing) the day of return with subsequent tests on day 2, 4 and 7 after they return.

From time to time some family members may be granted permission for an in-room visit. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis taking many in the moment issues into account and will often be a **one off** in-room visit. If an in-room visit is granted, please don't assume your next visit is also an in-room visit. Pressuring reception staff or Volunteers will not change that outcome.

Lastly, and not surprisingly we are short of volunteers so if you are inclined and available to volunteer to assist with concierge duties, we welcome enquiries. Please send an email to annpower@maroba.com.au or see Ann when you next visit Maroba.

With thanks to all those who have remained committed to co-operating with our visitation arrangements and to our family members who have put their best foot forward to take their place at the front door and other Volunteering roles to make such a difference to all those in our care.

Yours sincerely,



Viv Allanson, CEO