

7 September 2023

Dear Residents, Family and Friends,

Today marks a significant day, one we've been eagerly awaiting for over three years. NSW Health has made substantial changes to recommendations for managing Covid-19 in Residential Aged Care Facilities, and after a thorough review, we are pleased to announce the following changes effective immediately:

For Residents

- Residents will now only need to undergo a **Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)** when they are symptomatic, meaning no more twice-weekly RAT testing.

For Visitors

- Wearing **masks** is now optional for visitors; there is no longer a requirement to wear a mask while visiting Maroba.
- For those visiting daily, we kindly request **RAT testing** every 48 hours. If you visit less frequently, please RAT test before each visit. Keep a photo of your RAT test on your phone as proof if required. Free RAT kits are available at our reception, please feel free to take some home to test before your visit.
- There are no longer any restrictions on the **number of visitors**. You are welcome to use common areas, dine and drink while visiting, and even enjoy a meal with your loved one (we'll set you up at a table together).
- Check in** using the Cool Gard System is no longer mandatory.

It is vital that if you or a family member are unwell, that you test and report any cases of Covid and other infectious respiratory diseases to us. Please don't visit if unwell or Covid Positive or if you have been in contact with a Covid positive person in the last seven days.

For Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Agency Staff & Students

- Masks** are now optional, and surgical masks will be available on-site for anyone wishing to wear one.
- Our staff, volunteers, and students will **RAT test** before returning to Maroba after days off or when symptomatic. Contractors and Agency Staff will continue to RAT test each time before coming onsite at Maroba.
- Volunteers, Contractors, Agency Staff, and Students will continue to **check in** using our CoolGard System.

For some time now, Maroba residents have expressed their desire for masks to be removed so they can better understand and hear our teams, see our smiles, and create a more genuine living environment. We are thrilled to announce this change, and the absolute JOY among residents and teams today has been immeasurable.

We all however, must remain vigilant about the impact of respiratory illnesses on older individuals. If you are unwell, especially with respiratory symptoms, please refrain from visiting. Additionally, please consider the importance of Hand Hygiene, Social Distancing, and Vaccination in making a difference.

Rest assured that we will closely monitor community surveillance reports and our own environment. We will take appropriate action if we determine that risks have increased, which may include the reintroduction of masks or other precautions as needed.

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your partnership over the past three years. We've all worked tirelessly to keep everyone safe, and we are dedicated to continuing this approach in the future.

If you have concerns with our approach, please call us to discuss. Alternatively, you can contact:

- Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) on 1800 700 600
- The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822
- Senior Rights Service 1800 424 079

For additional information, please contact reception at 4935 0300 during office hours or email us at enquiries@maroba.om.au.

Warm Regards,



Rachel Hollis
General Manager People and Culture (in Viv CEO's absence)