

20 October 2023

Dear Residents, Family and Friends,

Just thought we would give an update on what has been happening at Maroba.

The first exciting piece of news is Maroba has received our formal end of notice on 05.10.23 to our non-compliance. Which means we are compliant with all standards and our star rating has now increased to a 3 rating. We will continue to monitor and improve our practices to ensure we minimise our risks and remain compliant.

Everyone has enjoyed the reduction in visiting guidelines over the last month which included removal of masks. It has been great for everyone to see each other's face and smiles and most importantly being able to communicate with the residents better. We will continue to monitor and act if we determine the risks have increased and reintroduce precautions as required. Currently there are other viruses and respiratory illnesses escalating in the community such as Rhinovirus and gastroenteritis, so it is important we remain vigilant, and we will continue to introduce precautions within Maroba to reduce the impact for our residents. This morning there was an article in the Port Stephens Examiner advising a gastro outbreak was widespread across the Hunter New England district with 24 child-care centres affected.

As of today, we have a gastroenteritis outbreak in our Hill suburb. So please refrain from visiting in the Hill unless necessary. We have all affected residents isolating in their rooms and other residents are free to move around in the suburb. We have implemented all necessary infection control practices and the HNE Public Health Unit has been notified.

Current guidelines at Maroba

For Residents

- Residents only undergo a **Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)** when they are symptomatic.

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.
- 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).
- There are no visiting hours however for the safety of our residents the doors are locked from sundown until sunset. During these times visitors access is by pressing the call button at the entrance, so a staff member is aware of your arrival and can let you in.

Dinner commences around 5.00pm and after dinner residents are usually settling in for the night. Arrangements can be made with staff if you are taking your loved one out during these hours to have easy access on your return.

- **Check in** using the Cool Gard System is no longer mandatory.

It is still 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.

Christmas is fast approaching, and we have had many enquires. Christmas is such a wonderful time to get together with family, so we encourage the residents to go home if they choose and join in with the festivities. For any resident going home for Christmas day, if you could please complete an excursion form by Friday 15 December 2023. This will ensure we have your loved one ready when you arrive. We have been asked if meals will be available for family and visitors on Christmas day, unfortunately, we do not have the capacity or resources to provide this service. You are most welcome to bring food along and have your gathering in our outdoor areas. We will not be booking any areas. You must bring everything you require and please leave the areas as you found them, clean and tidy.

We want to thank you for your continued partnership and understanding and we will continue to work together to keep everyone safe and living the best life they can.

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,

Tracy Walker

General Manager Operations (in Viv CEO's absence)