

21 December 2023

Dear Residents, Family and Friends,

Greetings ...whilst I would prefer to come with glad tidings, I come instead with a pre - Christmas news flash !

As of today, **we have another gastroenteritis outbreak in our Nobbys suburb**. So please refrain from visiting in Nobbys unless necessary. If it is necessary for you to visit you will be required to wear full PPE. 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. Whilst it started in the resident group many staff are now reporting symptoms of the infection, even those who have not been exposed in the workplace.

We are advised by our Local Health colleagues that it is highly prevalent in the community. Please take extra precautions to protect yourselves and others by staying away if you have any Gastrointestinal disturbance, as symptoms may vary in severity, depending on the overall wellbeing and vulnerabilities of the individual.

The good news is the Waratah suburb outbreak is declared over and families and friends are free to visit Waratah as usual. Residents have recovered well and are free to enjoy the festivities.

Yesterday we received news from NSW Health Local Health District to be aware COVID-19 activity in the community has increased in the past week and is now at high levels. Therefore 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.

Current COVID guidelines at Maroba:

For Residents

- Residents only undergo a **Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)** when they are symptomatic. And if there has been an exposure to a Covid positive person.

For Visitors

- Wearing surgical **masks** is now a requirement for visitors;
- 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, we advise consuming refreshments in the residents room only or outside.
- There are no visiting hours however for the safety of our residents the doors are locked from sunrise 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 but please show your RAT photo to reception.

For Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Agency Staff & Students

- **Masks** are essential and surgical masks will be available at the front door of the Manor
- Our staff, volunteers, and students will **RAT test** before returning to Maroba after days off and again mid roster 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.

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.

In spite of this current outbreak we do hope that residents will have a speedy recovery so that all who planned to go out for Christmas can be supported to do so. If your loved one is unwell or in isolation it will be **ill advised** to leave the facility. If that is the case let's talk closer to the time to make what ever special arrangements we can to support the affected residents .

From all the Maroba family we wish you and your families the very best of the season and trust you will experience the presence and peace of God this Christmas.



Viv Allanson
CEO