

07 June 2024

Dear Residents, Family and Friends,

News update....We currently have 4 residents with Covid across 3 suburbs. and multiple staff on leave due to covid. Whilst most residents are able to co-operate with in room isolation where this has not been possible we have placed restriction of movement in The Hill. Residents are able to move around the wing freely and exercises and activities will be offered within the suburb at this time. Visitors will be welcome but it is recommended you visit in the residents room and keep your mask in place. All other requirements to leave The Hill will be evaluated on a case by case basis. For example 2 residents who regularly attend the gym will be supported to do so. Further RAT testing will be carried out in the Manor today before we head into the Long Weekend and we will continue to monitor the situation closely. Our Covid Positive residents are tolerating the Antiviral treatment and doing well while one resident is commencing treatment this morning after being diagnosed yesterday .

The Local Health District and Public Health Unit are continuing to see a rising cases of acute respiratory illness in the community and an increase of outbreaks across Residential Aged Care Facilities in the Hunter. For now we will continue to observe the strong recommendation to return to mask wearing as it is definitely making a difference. **DO NOT visit if you are even slightly unwell, as a negative RAT is no guarantee you do not have an infectious respiratory disease.** Stay home and seek medical advice rather than press on with a visit. Please be cautious if you have returned from holidays or have attended large public events. Please remember to maintain good hand hygiene and social distancing practices.

Sadly it has come to my attention that one or 2 visitors have chosen not to observe the requirement to complete the necessary RAT testing because no one has asked for it. I find this a very sad situation as we rely on TRUST and believe that you have the same desire as we do to protect everyone's well being. It isn't about the checking that makes anyone safer it is a matter of self checking...No one benefits with even one person thinking it is a good idea to "TRICK" the measures we have put in place for everyone's benefit. Yes, there will be random checking after hours and you will do well to offer your RAT for checking at reception during office hours. I really do not want to go back to limiting visit to times when I have resources to have someone sitting at the entrance to check your tests...No one wants that. Let's work on the speed of TRUST and not try to deceive us. Your loved ones are the ones to suffer ...you get to go home and won't even have to isolate but it's different for communal living, everyone pays a high price.

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. This may escalate if other areas are impacted. Resident activities will be limited to the building you reside in for now.

For Visitors

- All visitors must undertake a RAT before visiting Maroba, even if you visit daily. Please write the date of the test on the RAT cartridge before taking a photo or placing it in a secure clear bag. Keep a photo of your RAT test on your phone as proof and present it to reception or a staff member after hours. Free RAT kits are still available at our reception, please feel free to take some home to test before your visit. Do not leave the kits in your car as they must be kept at a cool stable temperature to be effective.
- All visitors must wear a mask and if you are visiting a COVID positive resident you are expected to wear the full Protective attire provided. I also recommend limited visits to reduce the risk of Covid exposure. Please assess your own personal risk factors before such an exposure. As wearing masks is in place, there will be no eating or drinking in the facilities.
- No longer any restrictions on the number of visitors to Non Covid effected residents.
- There are no visiting hours however for the safety of our residents the doors are locked from **sunset until sunrise**. 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 for visitors but please show your RAT photo to reception.
- 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. Please let us know so we can assess the risk.

For Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Agency Staff & Students

- Our staff, volunteers, students and Agency Staff will continue to RAT test each time before coming onsite at Maroba.
- All staff, volunteers, students and Agency Staff must wear a mask whilst in the facilities.
- 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.



Viv Allanson OAM
CEO