

28th October ,2024

Dear Residents, Family and Friends,

News Flash ...I am very excited to advise that the Government Respiratory reports are showing numbers for COVID and other respiratory infections at an all-time low including outbreaks in Residential facilities which are at their lowest since Maroba have been keeping records. A lead indicator (based on trends in the data we capture) is that cases will start to increase in our area when increased cases are reported in Sydney regions first – we note that Sydney case are quite low also at this time.



Our Infection Prevention and Control team have acted to consider how we might change gears around our prevention strategies whilst still appreciating the risks more generally in our community. One of the best protections for everyone is **DO NOT to 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. **If in doubt stay home.**

There will be random RAT checking after hours and you will do well to offer your RAT for checking at reception during office hours. Let's work on the speed of TRUST and not try to enter without a fresh test. 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.

For Visitors

- all regular visitors need only undertake a RAT test once a week unless you have been travelling, attending large events or have been exposed to any person with Covid or other Respiratory Infection. I suggest it be on your first visit of the week being Monday to Sunday.
- All other visitors, Contractors and Students must continue to undertake a RAT prior to each visit.
- 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.
- No 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...please be patient ! 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.

For Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Agency Staff & Students

- Our staff, volunteers, students and Agency Staff will continue to RAT test as per staff notices 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.

November is on the doorstep and already families are starting to make plans for Christmas. Whilst Maroba has planning well underway we do always seem to be at the mercy of other factors so must remain flexible in our approach.

I can confirm that we are not able to accommodate additional guests for Christmas meals yet if you do wish to join your loved ones you may bring your own treats to enjoy with them keeping in mind general Food Safety protocols. Whilst we will be providing residents with their beverages of choice we are not licenced for others to BYO or consume Alcohol within our facilities. There are many areas across Maroba both inside and out where families may enjoy some get togethers. We are not intending to take bookings or reservations for any of these communal spaces.

Start thinking about Christmas outings and Transport requirements as it can be very difficult to book Taxis if left to the last minute. Of course, if you are taking any residents out we always appreciate early advise to ensure we can have them ready in a timely manner.

I will be heading off to Hawaii for a pre-Christmas Holiday and will be away from 10/11/24 for 4 weeks. Needless to say, some cheeky residents are already quizzing me about my grass skirt and coconuts. I look forward to returning in time for the Christmas festivities with lots of holiday tales.

Whilst I am away don't hesitate to reach out to Rachel, Louise, Sarah and Janelle as all will be only too pleased to support you and your loved ones during my absence.



Viv Allanson OAM
CEO