

15th July 2025

Dear Residents, Family and Friends,

The time has come... its back into masks for the Maroba family.

So many respiratory viruses are circulating across our community and both residents and staff are being impacted. We have a cluster of Rhinovirus infections (the common cold) within the Lodge and 1 case in the Manor with more anticipated. As the common cold is virulent and can make people very unwell, I endorse the decision of our Infection Control team to make mask wearing compulsory within Maroba for the next 4 weeks. As we have another 6 weeks of winter ahead and as community cases are still rising across the nation, we don't anticipate we will be able to relax our protocols in the short term.

Think of our residents who are unwell and isolating to protect their fellow residents during their illness. Full PCR testing has been conducted on all residents with cold and flu symptoms and we will continue to react quickly to ensure appropriate treatment and support is offered and that the spread of the virus is minimised.

This is our reminder to all visitors to Maroba to get vaccinated, stay vigilant and follow all reasonable instructions to keep our entire community safe from communicable diseases such as Influenza, Covid, RSV, Rhinovirus, Pneumonia and Shingles just to name a few.

New residents may not have their vaccinations up to date, so it is very important to consider accepting the vaccination services offered here at Maroba.

Travellers remain at high risk as does mingling in crowded venues or close contact with any infected person (who may or may not have symptoms).

Our multi-pronged approach works, so we ask that you do not visit if you are unwell or have even the slightest respiratory or gastrointestinal symptoms. Keep testing before each visit and make sure you remind other family members of the requirement for RAT testing to visit Maroba. We are depending on you and trust you will co-operate with these precautions for the sake of everyone not just your loved one.

Current COVID/ Respiratory Illness guidelines at Maroba:

For Residents

- Residents undergo a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) when they are symptomatic and if there has been an exposure to a Covid positive person or if there is high risk within our community. PCR testing is being carried out if the RAT is negative and the resident has ongoing symptoms. If an outbreak occurs, then all residents in that area will undergo testing for respiratory illness. Please know that if your family member tests positive to any of the respiratory illnesses tested, we will update you as soon as possible by phone.

Be aware that if a resident while isolating wishes to go out for a drive, social outing with family or a medical appointment then they should wear a mask to prevent the spread of the virus. If attending a medical appointment, you must advise the clinic of the current infection as they may need to postpone it.

For Visitors – must wear a Blue Surgical mask.

- 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 who are not regularly visiting we ask that you undertake a RAT prior to every visit. RATs are available at Reception and at the front door.

- 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 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 visitor 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 – must wear P2 mask (pink, black or white)

- 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 new 'Loop Safe' Electronic Check in 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.

Let me take this opportunity to remind everyone that safety matters during the winter season as we all try to stay warm. There has been several community fire events caused by faulty electrical equipment (often dryers, heaters and electric blankets). Sadly, these fires have led to loss of precious lives, so do all you reasonably can to check any electrical items and do not place flammable items near direct heat sources. Oh, and check your smoke detectors as they do save lives!

Warm Regards



Viv Allanson OAM - CEO Maroba

