

MEMORANDUM



To All Residents, Staff and Visitors
From Angela Wright
Date 28 January 2022
Subject COVID-19 Preparedness

Dear Staff and Visitors,

As part of keeping you up to date and with the imminent opening of our borders and the current spread of the Omicron variant we felt it was timely to inform you of what we have been preparing in relation to COVID.

The care of our residents remains our top priority, and we are doing everything we can to keep our residents and staff safe. As part of our COVID preparedness we have been updating our Outbreak Management Plan and preparing our staff and resources in case of an outbreak to our facilities.

As part of our Outbreak Management Plan we have been meeting weekly to ensure everything is in place and ready. We have developed our Outbreak Management Team which would be activated in the event of an outbreak at one of our facilities. This team work with the direct support of experts from the Australian and State/Territory Governments, the Public Health Unit, and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to manage an outbreak if one was to occur.

As part of our plan we have infection control expertise on the ground, enough personal protective equipment (set aside for an outbreak), an emergency workforce and regular COVID-19 testing. We have planned preventative measures such as isolated food management and service, increased cleaning, minimising contact, appropriate zoning of facilities resources to contain a possible infection, increased clinical care and monitoring, strict laundry protocol and waste management.

During an Outbreak

In the event of an outbreak we would implement immediate steps to increase infection control and limit the chances of COVID-19 spreading, including:

- immediate testing of all staff and residents
- restricting access to the facility based on advice from the government, taking into consideration special plans for visiting palliative residents
- carers will wear full protective equipment; including masks, gloves and gowns

MEMORANDUM



- reviewing where residents are located in the facility, and moving or isolating them if needed to stop the spread of the virus. Zones may be set up as part of our response
- changing staffing arrangements so that staff work with fewer residents
- Additional staff to maintain communication with each residents nominated representative regularly, to provide them with an update. Based on the resources and response we will inform nominated residents of the frequency of contact we will provide.
- Information will be updated regularly on our website and sent via memo, email and phone.
- Lifestyle changes to accommodate people in isolation, continued connection with family and friends during a lockdown and increased support to maintain mental health. We know it is important for you to stay in touch with your loved ones, so we are working to support your contact through phone and video calls
- Ensuring that all residents have their daily needs met including meals, medications, showering and toileting and all clinical care needs continue to be provided. Timings of meals and showering may need to be adjusted to ensure COVID precautions can be maintained
- adding additional staff to support a higher level of infection control, and
- increasing deep cleaning and waste management

How can you support us?

- The nominated contact (primary contact) is the only person we will be able to talk to during an outbreak. We would appreciate that the nominated contact takes on the responsibility to keep all other family and friends informed and ask them not to contact the residence directly.
- If you would like to take your resident home in time of an outbreak, please make this decision early and be prepared. Your loved one will not be able to return during an active outbreak. Please inform the general manager of your intentions prior to any outbreak in the residence .Please be aware that we are guided by the Department of Health and they may determine that no resident can leave the home once an outbreak occurs.

MEMORANDUM



- Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) is not a formal way of providing a negative Antigen test as yet. However, Oryx have purchased a number of tests in preparation for this possibly being implemented as a formal process in WA in the future. Over the coming weeks we expect that RAT's will be more readily available from chemists and other outlets for private purchase. Recent announcements include Concession card holders have access to 10 free RAT's every three months. We are in discussions with our preferred pharmacy, Optimal CoPharmacy to see if they can be supplied directly however they have no supply at this stage.
- Helping to prepare your loved one for a lockdown. Consider what you may be able to provide prior to an outbreak to make things more bearable for your family member if they are confined to their room for any period of time. Delivery of food packages during an outbreak will not be able to be accommodated. Please see attached information sheet for ideas.
- Consider end of life planning with your loved one or updating those plans relevant to COVID. This helps medical professionals make the appropriate clinical decisions in line with a residents wishes.

Support for Families

Families can utilise the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) who can provide additional support during an outbreak. OPAN is an independent, free service providing support for older people and their family members.

Families and residents can call the OPAN COVID-19 Support Line on 1800 700 600, 6am – 10pm 7 days a week, to talk with someone about the COVID-19 situation and its impact, or if worried about a loved one and need to talk to someone. We thank you again for your support in helping prepare for this pandemic and to mitigate the risks to our residents and staff as much as is practicably possible.

Kind regards,

Angela Wright
Chief Operating Officer