

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear friends,

This letter follows my letter dated Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021. It provides an update about minor changes to public health advice in relation to visitor restrictions. We do not yet have an update in relation to the rules which will apply at Christmas, so please be patient and hold off making any firm plans for Christmas until we know more. We will provide guidance about Christmas as soon as we can.

### **Visitor restrictions – update**

Visits are still limited to two fully vaccinated visitors per resident per day, plus two children under 12 if they are accompanied by a fully vaccinated visitor. For these purposes fully vaccinated means having the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose at least 14-days prior to the visit.

Visits must not take place in communal areas, which means that they should occur in resident rooms or outdoors.

The current conditions of entry are:

- Current influenza vaccination and full COVID-19 vaccination if you are eligible;
- NIL COVID-19 symptoms;
- Not being a close or casual contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case who is within their isolation period;
- Not waiting for a COVID-19 test result;
- Not been overseas in the past 14-days unless:
  - you are fully vaccinated with a negative COVID-19 test result on or after day-7 of arrival in NSW, or
  - you are a fully vaccinated international flight crew member with evidence of a negative PCR test with 24-hours of your visit or a negative rapid antigen test on the day of and prior to your visit

For end-of-life visits up to four people, including children, are permitted at any one time regardless of vaccination status. A negative rapid antigen test is required for each unvaccinated visitor on the day of and prior to the visit. If you are unable to organise your own rapid antigen test prior to the visit, we can organise a test at your cost.

Surgical masks remain mandatory for all visitors, and visitors are expected to avoid non-essential interaction with staff, other residents, and other visitors.

---

#### **Harbison**

Gundungurra Country  
T 02 4868 6200  
reception@harbisoncare.org.au  
www.harbisoncare.org.au

PO Box 349  
Bowral NSW 2576  
ABN 23 001 507 624  
Registered NDIS Provider

#### **Burradoo**

2 Charlotte Street  
Burradoo NSW 2576  
F 02 4868 6476

#### **Moss Vale**

36 Yarrowa Road  
Moss Vale NSW 2577  
F 02 4869 3214

All visitors must sign in with the Service NSW app or Service NSW form and register their visit and check their temperature using our visitor registration kiosk. You must provide evidence of your influenza and COVID-19 vaccination status. Frequent visitors may request a keychain QR code to make registration more convenient when you visit. Keychains tags must be returned to Harbison when they are no longer required.

### **COVID-19 booster doses**

In-reach clinics are being organised by government to administer 3<sup>rd</sup> “booster” doses of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to residents and staff. An information sheet is enclosed. We will notify you when the dates for clinics at Harbison are confirmed. A fact sheet has already been shared with staff.

### **Feedback and complaints**

We welcome feedback to help us improve our care and services. We have a system to record and manage feedback, which is overseen by our Feedback & Complaints Officer. You can access the system on our website ([www.harbison.org.au](http://www.harbison.org.au)) or by scanning the QR codes displayed in our homes, or you can complete a form or simply tell someone, including me (ph. 02 4868 6201 (direct) or email [david.cochran@harbisoncare.org.au](mailto:david.cochran@harbisoncare.org.au)).

If you would like the help of an advocate or would like independent advice about your rights, then we recommend the free Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN – ph. 1800 700 600 or [www.opan.org.au](http://www.opan.org.au)) which is funded by the Commonwealth or the excellent Seniors Rights Service (ph. 1800 424 079 or [www.seniorsrightsservice.org.au](http://www.seniorsrightsservice.org.au)) which is funded by the NSW Government. Both services are free, independent, and confidential and we are happy to work with them to resolve issues which are important to you.

If you cannot resolve an issue with us or by using an advocate, then you may wish to escalate your concern to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ph. 1800 951 822 or [www.agedcarequality.gov.au](http://www.agedcarequality.gov.au)).

The Commission has just published the latest performance report which shows that there were 0.84 complaints per 100 residents in the last quarter, which is a slight decrease on the previous quarter. Harbison aims to be among the 67% of providers about whom no complaints are made, so we welcome the opportunity to address problems before they are escalated. In the past quarter only 8% of complaints to the Commission were made by residents, which is why the advocacy services listed above can be so useful.

Of course, positive feedback and suggestions are equally important to ensure we know what is working well and what is valued by residents and their families. We appreciate people taking the time to share their experience with us and hope our system makes the process simple and quick.

In the past 3-months Harbison has received 59 complaints, of which 52 have been resolved. In the same period, we received 164 compliments, with almost half of them relating to lifestyle and activities. Thank you to everyone who has provided us with this valuable feedback.

### **Moss Vale Significant Refurbishment – official opening**

There are still some minor works to complete, but we are honoured that General Sir Peter John Cosgrove, AK, CVO, MC and his wife, Lynne, will officially open the refurbished home this afternoon. Sir Peter was Governor-General of Australia from 2014 to 2019 and the Cosgrove family name is well known in our region. I look forward to celebrating the official end of the construction project with residents and staff and thank everyone for their patience during the project.

It is always a difficult decision to undertake refurbishment in a home because of the disruption to residents and staff, but the decision to proceed despite the pandemic was made carefully with the aim of significantly improving physical, social, and emotional quality of life at Moss Vale.

**Road Worlds for Seniors – Harbison is *Crew of the Year***

It was my privilege to present certificates and medals to every member of our Road Worlds team last week. I also presented a new bike to the Moss Vale crew, funded by generous donations received during Road Worlds, which brings our fleet of THERA therapy bikes to six.

As you know, I am very proud of the success of our team. Our residents were among 5,000 people from 11 countries, competing in more than 250 teams. So, I was thrilled to announce to the teams that Harbison has been named *Crew of the Year* for 2021 in recognition of the best overall contribution by any organisation to the competition.

While we are not in it for the awards, this is well deserved recognition for the volunteers and staff who supported our competitors throughout the 26-days of competition and worked so creatively and diligently in the months leading up to the race. If ever there was a year when the support team could have said “too hard”, this was it. But instead of letting the pandemic become an excuse to limit our effort, the team recognised that Motiview mattered this year, more than ever.

Motiview is available to all residents throughout the year. We hope to field more than 100 competitors next year, so if you have not tried Motiview and would like to have a go just let a member of staff know. Almost anyone, regardless of cognitive or physical ability, can participate and benefit from the program.

Thank you for reading this letter. If you have any questions or concerns about these or any other issues, please contact us. Meanwhile, we look forward to further easing of COVID-19 restrictions for residential aged care.

Yours sincerely,



David Cochran  
**Chief Executive Officer**

**Encl.**



Australian Government

## COVID-19 VACCINATION

# COVID-19 booster vaccination information for residents of aged care facilities

Information current as at 28 October 2021

From 8 November 2021, the Australian Government will roll out a national COVID-19 vaccine booster program for people in residential aged care.

The COVID-19 vaccine booster program is recommended by Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI).

The expert advice is that people are eligible for a booster vaccination if they completed their second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine more than six months ago. Read [ATAGI recommendations on the use of a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine | Australian Government Department of Health](#).

Every resident living in an aged care facility who has received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine will be offered a Pfizer vaccine booster dose.

Your facility staff will discuss with you, or your substitute decision maker, whether you consent to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster and they will assist you to complete a consent form.

Consenting residents who received their second dose vaccination at least six months ago can receive a booster vaccine at an in-reach clinic at your facility.

The booster clinic will be scheduled to happen at least six months after your facility held the second dose vaccination clinic for residents.

### Added protection for people who are fully vaccinated

Aged care residents who have had two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine can be reassured that they are fully vaccinated.

People who have received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine means they are very well protected against serious illness, hospitalisation or death from COVID-19.

However, a booster dose will boost your immune response and provide an additional layer to further reduce the risk of breakthrough infection (when a fully vaccinated person gets COVID-19 and is at risk of transmitting the virus to others).

### **When you are eligible to receive your booster vaccination**

Residents in aged care facilities who received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine at least six months ago are now eligible for a booster dose.

These residents will be offered a COVID-19 booster dose through Commonwealth in-reach clinics, like those that delivered the initial first and second dose clinics at your facility earlier this year.

Workers will also be offered a booster dose at the in-reach clinics if at least six months has passed since they received their second dose.

Your facility will notify you when the COVID-19 vaccine booster clinic is scheduled. This will occur in the coming months - at least six months after the facility held its second dose COVID-19 vaccination clinic for residents.

Every residential aged care facility across Australia will be allocated a Commonwealth vaccine provider. This provider will deliver a booster clinic for all residents and workers who completed their primary course (two doses) at least six months earlier.

Your facility will discuss the booster program and scheduled date of the booster clinic with you.

**If you received your second dose** of a COVID-19 vaccination less than six months ago, you will not be due for your booster yet. However, your facility will ensure you can receive a booster vaccination from a visiting GP or pharmacist when at least six months has passed since you had your second dose.

**If you have only received your first dose** of a COVID-19 vaccine, you can receive your second dose of a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at the facility's booster clinic. Your facility will arrange for you to receive your booster dose within the recommended interval (at least six months) from a visiting GP or pharmacist.

**If you have not yet been vaccinated**, you can receive your first dose of a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at the facility's booster clinic. Your facility will arrange for you to receive your second dose and booster dose within the recommended intervals from a visiting GP or pharmacist.

## Providing consent

All residents in aged care must provide valid consent before receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, including for a booster vaccine.

Your facility is responsible for obtaining your consent to vaccination.

Facilities will support residents to consent to a booster vaccination and they will make residents' consent forms available to the Commonwealth vaccine provider on the day of clinic.

Aged care providers keep a record of resident's consent to share with those who administer the vaccine for recording on the Australian Immunisation Register.

## Consent by a guardian or substitute decision-maker

In some cases, a guardian or substitute decision maker will be responsible for consenting to vaccination on behalf of a resident in aged care.

Some jurisdictions have specific requirements relevant to guardians or substitute decision makes who are consenting on behalf of another person.

If consenting to COVID-19 vaccination on behalf of a resident living in an aged care facility, please refer to the enduring guardianship legislation in your state or territory.

## Is a booster dose the same as a third dose, and should I get a booster if I've already had a third dose?

A booster vaccination is different to a third dose.

ATAGI has recommended only people who are [severely immunocompromised](#) should receive a third dose as part of their primary course.

ATAGI has not yet issued advice on whether people who require a third dose will need a booster.

## Safety of COVID-19 booster dose

Common, mild side effects following a booster dose may be like those some people may have experienced after their previous COVID-19 vaccinations. These include a headache or mild fever and generally do not last more than 24 hours.

If you have any concerns, please speak with your GP or other allied health professional.

## Type of vaccine to be used for booster doses

The Pfizer (Corminaty) COVID-19 vaccine is approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and recommended by the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) for the COVID-19 booster program in Australia.

You can have the Pfizer vaccine as a booster no matter which vaccine brand you had for your first two doses.

You can also receive the AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria) vaccine as your booster if you:

- can't have the Pfizer vaccine for medical reasons
- had two doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine previously and prefer to receive this vaccine as your booster.

## Where can I get information to help me decide about getting a COVID-19 booster vaccination?

For more information visit the Department of Health website page for [residents in aged care](#).