

25 July 2022

Dear friends,

This letter follows my letter dated Tuesday, 19 July 2022. It provides an update about the COVID-19 outbreaks which we are managing at Burradoo and Moss Vale. As usual, we share this information with a wide range of people because we are committed to the principle of transparency. We know this is a worrying time for residents and families, and we provide direct updates to families of any residents who are unwell.

COVID-19 outbreak update

Today, we have six active cases at Burradoo and ten active cases at Moss Vale.

The only isolated wing at Moss Vale is Alpine, where just over half the residents have been infected since the outbreak began on Thursday, 7 July 2022.

We have compartmentalised the hostel to avoid movement between that area and our higher-needs wings. We have active cases in Berrima and Penrose but have resolved the cases in Joadja. We are strongly recommending that any resident who is concerned about COVID-19 should stay in their room, avoid contact with other residents, and exercise in the gardens. However, if residents from Joadja, Penrose, or Berrima choose to take the risk, then the dining room and communal areas are accessible. No resident should move between the hostel and the other areas of the building.

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Moss Vale staff are using separate entry/exits based on their shift allocations. This is to minimise exposure risk between shifts and compartments. Alpine staff should use the front door to Alpine. Wingello, Avoca, Mandemar, and Meryla staff should use the loading dock, and hostel staff should use the main entry. Shift handovers may be conducted using Microsoft Teams while compartments are activated.

At Burradoo, Gibraltar and Lindsay are isolated from the rest of the building, and the cottage, hostel, and main building are being treated as separate compartments. Like Alpine, the need to isolate Gibraltar and Lindsay arises due to circumstances where compliance with infection prevention and control (IPC) by residents is difficult. The main dining room is temporarily closed, but the hostel dining room is open. Like Moss Vale, we strongly recommend that any resident who is worried about COVID-19 should remain in their room, avoid contact with other residents, and use the outdoor areas for exercise where possible.

We cannot predict how long outbreak conditions will persist. New asymptomatic cases were detected by PCR surveillance testing, which proves that undetected spread is a reality.

Staff must follow their IPC training or transmission will occur from staff to residents. Partners-in-Care must also comply strictly with IPC and breaches will be treated seriously. Partnership-in-Care status will be revoked if IPC breaches persist. We all have a high responsibility to work together to ensure we maintain a safe workplace.

Sadly, we have reported the death of one resident at Moss Vale with COVID-19.

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Contact with families during outbreak

We do not have the resources during an outbreak to contact multiple family members with updates. Each resident should have a single nominated family contact who can provide other family members with updates as they occur. If families cannot agree who the nominated contact should be, then we will choose the person responsible as defined under the NSW Guardianship Act. We apologise if this arrangement causes any problems, but it takes away from essential care if we provide more than one update per resident/family. Thank you in advance for your cooperation on this issue.

If a resident is unwell then our nurses will provide direct updates at least daily, subject to consent from the resident where appropriate. If a resident is isolated but otherwise well, then our nursing staff will provide a direct update at least weekly, again subject to consent by the resident. Our care teams will also work to support virtual contact with the resident if there is not a Partner-in-Care available for the resident.

Next family Zoom meeting

We normally host a monthly meeting for families and friends by Zoom. However, during outbreaks we increase the frequency by hosting weekly meetings.

Fran McPherson organises these meetings and can provide details on request. Details of the next meeting are included with the email which accompanies this letter to family members. These meetings are a great opportunity for families to hear from me and raise issues which are important to them. We encourage everyone to attend them, and simply ask that private issues about specific residents are not raised in the meetings.

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No change to visitor restrictions

There is no change to visitor restrictions. Only Partners-in-Care and end-of-life visits are possible for now.

The Government reports that 1,013 aged care providers have active outbreaks as of Friday, 22 July 2022. This reflects the wave of transmission spreading through the community. In Australia, for every two residents who become infected, there is approximately one staff case. This has a large impact on the available workforce, which is why it is so important to minimise the risks in our workplace.

It is not possible to prevent outbreaks when the incidence of community transmission is so high. But it is possible to minimise the risk, by all working together and following the simple precautions which have been proven so effective in the past two and a half years.

If you are over the age of 30, then we strongly recommend you consider the 4th Winter dose which is now available, and which is recommended for those of us over the age of 50. I've had mine.

Thank you for reading this letter. I will provide another update soon.

Yours sincerely,



David Cochran
Chief Executive Officer

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