



Monday, 21 November 2022

Dear friends,

This letter follows my letter dated Friday, 18 November 2022 and provides an update about the COVID-19 outbreaks at Harbison. As usual, we are circulating this information to residents and their representatives, our workforce, local general practices, our company members, and the wider community.

#### **Harbison Moss Vale COVID-19 outbreak – update**

As expected, the number of cases at Moss Vale has increased. Avoca, Wingello, Meryla, Joadja, and Berrima have active cases. We expect further cases to be detected through ongoing RAT and PCR testing. Except for one (1) resident who has refused treatment, all infected residents are receiving anti-viral treatment. At this stage, none of the infected residents are clinically unstable.

#### **Harbison Burradoo – update**

We have one (1) confirmed case of COVID-19 at Burradoo and will declare an outbreak if further cases are detected within 72 hours. We are monitoring and testing for two (2) suspected cases. So far, Alexandria and Gibraltar are the areas of concern. We are performing RAT testing every second (2<sup>nd</sup>) day.

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#### **Harbison**

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ABN 23 001 507 624  
Registered NDIS Provider

#### **Burradoo**

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Burradoo NSW 2576  
F 02 4868 6476

#### **Moss Vale**

36 Yarrowa Road  
Moss Vale NSW 2577  
F 02 4869 3214

## **COVID-19 management**

The number of Australian residential aged care homes with active COVID-19 outbreaks has increased and is now 14 times higher than this time last year. We are working with the Public Health Unit to manage our cases, with the goal of maintaining visitor access and normal routines as much as possible. So far, the impact on staff is low but we note that furlough is impacting Registered Nurse availability. We will engage agency nurses if possible, to cover the associated unplanned leave.

We expect that the supply of PPE and anti-viral medication, access to PCR testing, and availability of staff will come under pressure as the number of outbreaks across Australia increases. If it becomes necessary to restrict visitor access, the Partnership-in-Care program will again become very important.

Residents who are concerned about catching COVID-19 should remain in their rooms and exercise outdoors when weather permits. We remind you that it is also usually possible to take leave from Harbison to temporarily stay with friends or family if you are concerned about lockdowns and the potential impact on Christmas plans. Contact your Personal Care Manager if you require further information about this option.

The value of experience is evident as our teams respond to the emerging situation. We are well organised and prepared, and our Outbreak Management Team is working around the clock to coordinate our response. It is unlikely that the situation will resolve before Christmas, so please manage your expectations accordingly. We know from past outbreaks that it takes patience, resilience, and perseverance to close an outbreak.

## **Minimum PPE requirements**

The minimum PPE for staff and visitors at Moss Vale is a P2/N95 mask combined with eye protection e.g., a face shield. The minimum PPE for staff and visitors at Burradoo is a P2/N95 mask, but this will change immediately to the same requirements as Moss Vale if an outbreak is declared. Tier 3 PPE must be used by staff and visitors when in a red zone or providing direct care to a confirmed or suspected case, following proper donning and doffing procedures.

## **Advance care planning**

If your Advance Care Plan or Advance Care Directive includes transfer to hospital for treatment, please note that Bowral and District Hospital is unlikely to accept COVID-19 patients. This means that any transfer would most likely be to Sydney. It may be a good time to urgently review your plans, in consultation with your GP, and notify us of any changes in relation to the management of COVID-19 or other acute respiratory infections.

## **Staff furlough – changed process**

In the past, staff have received individual furlough notices which set out instructions based on their circumstances. This is no longer required because of simplified guidelines.

- You must test yourself by RAT on the day of and prior to each shift.
- If you test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 you must notify your manager immediately and stay away from work for seven (7) days.
- You may return to work on day eight (8) if you test negative by RAT, or on day ten (10) if you are asymptomatic regardless of your test result.

## **Family Zoom meetings**

Weekly family Zoom meetings commence this week as follow:

Date: Wednesday, 23 November

Time: 11am via this link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88478207318?pwd=dGlwb1phaS9PcVNlWVpEOUo0VWdcZz09>

We strongly recommend that concerned family members attend these virtual meetings, however direct daily updates are provided to the person responsible for any infected resident during their isolation period.

If you have been on this journey with us before you know that the situation can change quickly. We are committed to keeping everyone informed as circumstances change, but our priority is always the residents who have COVID-19 and their representatives.

We are doing our best to work through this latest outbreak without imposing additional restrictions, but success depends on high levels of cooperation and a little bit of luck.

Please stay away if you are unwell or have been exposed to COVID-19, and please practice careful hand hygiene and wear your PPE properly if you are on site. Remember, everyone is required to have a negative RAT on the day of and prior to entry to Harbison.

Thank you for reading this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Cochran', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Cochran  
**Chief Executive Officer**