

Wednesday 25 October 2023

Dear friends,

This letter contains important information about the COVID-19 outbreak at Harbison Moss Vale. As usual we are sharing the update with our residents and their families, our workforce, and the local community.

COVID-19 outbreak at Harbison Moss Vale:

We are managing a COVID-19 outbreak at Moss Vale and working closely with the Public Health Unit. At last count, we have 9 active resident cases and 4 staff cases. Since the beginning of the outbreak 40 residents and 16 staff have been affected, but most cases involve mild symptoms or are asymptomatic.

We have a well-established protocol for managing outbreaks with the goal of minimising restrictions on residents. Currently, there are no additional visitor restrictions at Moss Vale, but we urge visitors to be mindful that they are entering an active outbreak site. People at higher risk are strongly advised to postpone their visits until the outbreak is resolved.

Visitors are required to wear P2/N95 masks, diligently practice hand hygiene before, during, and after their visit, and restrict their visit to the resident's room, outdoor areas, or the café. Visiting hours remain from 10 am to 4 pm, with special considerations for Partners-in-care and end-of-life visits.

Residents who are not infected are free to move about the home and engage in activities. Residents who have concerns about potential COVID-19 exposure should exercise caution by avoiding close interactions with other residents and restrict their movements (outdoor activities are encouraged when weather permits). Infected or symptomatic residents are required to isolate in their rooms for a minimum of 7 days or as directed by the Public Health Unit.

Please avoid visiting Harbison if you are feeling unwell. If you have concerns about a resident, please be reassured that we will contact you as necessary. There is no need to reach out to Harbison to inquire about the status of a resident.

Heart & Home membership

It is now 3 months since we launched our Heart & Home membership program. Feedback about the program has been positive, and it has been great to see a wide range of clever uses for membership points by residents. The program is a key initiative to support resident choice and autonomy and provides each resident with the flexibility to individualise their care and services to suit their needs and preferences.

If you would like more information about the program please contact our Residential Care Manager, Danny Turner (danny.turner@harbisoncare.org.au).

Bowral Classic

The 2023 Bowral Classic last weekend was a great event, showcasing the Southern Highlands. Our Cycling Without Age team participated in the 85km course, providing residents with an opportunity to ride as passengers in our specially modified trishaws. Apart from the scenery and the fun of riding with thousands of other people, the trishaws create meaningful opportunities for residents to share their memories and stories with their pilots, allowing them to see the Highlands through their eyes.

Thank you to the team of staff and volunteers who supported our riders – it takes far longer to set everything up and plan for every contingency than it does to complete the course. Thanks to you, our residents had another memorable day in their community,

and our Cycling Without Age program was exposed to a much larger audience. If you would like to know more about the program, just contact our Partnership Manager, Zac Hulm (zac.hulm@harbisoncare.org.au).

Preparing for the high-risk weather season

Many of us recall the 2019-20 fire season, and it seems that 2023-24 will be another warm year with increased risk of heatwaves and bushfires. The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission recently reminded providers of the importance of being prepared. In the next few weeks, we will be testing our Business Continuity Plan to ensure our staff are prepared for any emergency. Visitors will be asked to cooperate with staff if an exercise is in progress when they arrive, and we apologise in advance for any inconvenience the drills may cause.

Harbison invested heavily in emergency management after the 2019-20 fires, so we are confident in our capacity to keep our homes safe. You can play your part by monitoring fluid intake and for signs of overheating during any unusually warm weather. Older people and people living with dementia are at higher risk of overheating and sunburn, so staff will be monitoring closely and treating heatwave risk as a priority. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of staff.

Harbison Christmas cards

Each Christmas Harbison prints Christmas cards featuring artwork by our residents. Any profits go back into our activities program to support our residents. The cards are a great way to showcase the abilities of our residents. Cards are available for purchase for only \$2 each from reception and the café, and on our website (www.harbison.org.au) from November. If you have any questions simply phone reception during office hours (02 4868 6200).

2023 Road Worlds for Seniors - update

Representing Australia, the *Slow Speed Demons* are holding 3rd and 4th places with 3 days to go in the 2023 Road Worlds for Seniors. They have completed more than 14,000 km since Monday, 2 October and are hot on the heels of teams from Canada and Norway.

In the individual race our champions are holding 3 of the top-20 spots in the men's race, and 6th in the women's' race. Remember, there are 6,854 cyclists in the event this year!

Our support teams have done an incredible job despite the challenges of managing a COVID-19 outbreak during the race. I am proud of the way they have been able to minimise the impact of the outbreak on this very special opportunity for our residents. I look forward to seeing them all cross the finish line together at the end of the week, and to the medal ceremony that will follow.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Cochran', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Cochran
Chief Executive Officer