

Wednesday, 22 May 2024

Dear friends,

This letter is provided to each resident and their representative(s) and members of staff. It contains important information about preventing outbreaks at Harbison.

Winter preparations 2024

Winter is a few weeks away, but the 2024 'flu season has begun, and we are seeing increasing levels of COVID-19, RSV, and other viruses like whopping cough (pertussis) in the community and among our workforces. In the past month, the number of residential aged care services with outbreaks has increased by almost 35% and we expect to see that trend continue. Because these viruses are circulating at the same time it is important that everyone takes responsibility for doing what they can to minimise the impact of themselves and others.

Influenza vaccination

Employees, contractors, and volunteers must have a current influenza vaccination. We have been offering free annual vaccinations to our workforce over the past few weeks. This is the best way to protect our residents from the 'flu.

The Australian Technical Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommends that *every* adult receives a 'flu vaccination. For people over the age of 65 it is free under the National Immunisation Program. We strongly recommend that all residents and visitors have an influenza vaccination if they are clinically eligible. We remind you that our outbreak management plan may limit access by unvaccinated visitors during an outbreak, so we encourage you to plan ahead for that contingency.

COVID-19 vaccination

We strongly recommend that residents keep their COVID-19 vaccinations up to date. ATAGI recommends people over the age of 75 have a booster dose every 6-months and people over the age of 65 every 12-months. If you have any questions about your eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination, please consult your GP. Residents should also be pre-assessed by their GP for COVID-19 antiviral medication. Our Registered Nurses have been working to ensure that every resident who wants to be vaccinated is up to date with their immunisation, but if you have any concerns about your status, please ask your nurse.

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

Staff are urged to consider their individual circumstances and stay up to date with any recommended COVID-19 vaccinations. As of May 2024, *summarised* ATAGI recommendations for booster doses are:

5 years to 17 years

Without severe immunocompromise – Vaccination **not recommended**.
With severe immunocompromise – **Eligible** for a dose every 12 months.

18 years to 64 years

Without severe immunocompromise – **Eligible** for a dose every 12 months
With severe immunocompromise – one dose every 12 months is **recommended** and **eligible** for a dose every 6 months.

65 years to 74 years

One dose every 12 months is **recommended** and **eligible** for a dose every 6 months.

75 years and older

One dose every 6 months is **recommended**.

Motiview for physical, psychological, and social well-being

In 2018, Harbison introduced Motiview to Australia. Each year a growing number of residents have competed in the annual Road Worlds for Seniors. Last year, 6,986 people from 10 countries completed a collective 229,930km (enough to circle the world 5.7 times!).

Last Friday, new research was published¹ about the benefits of this program, and I am proud to say that the research was conducted at, and co-authored by, Harbison. Congratulations to Zac Hulm, Nitish Mathew, and Saili Deodhar for rising to this challenge, and thanks to our research partners at the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development and the School of Health Sciences at Western Sydney University, and the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The team presented their findings at the 56th Australian Association Gerontology Conference last year, but there is nothing like the recognition that comes with publication. Well done to everyone involved!

This year, Road Worlds for Seniors will run from 7 October to 1 November 2024. Mark it in your diaries and watch this space for more news about our Motiview program.

Thank you for reading this letter. If you have not already, please consider your vaccination status and act now to protect yourself and those around you.

Yours sincerely,



David Cochran
Chief Executive Officer

¹ Brookman R et al., 2024, 'Evaluation of An Exercise Program Incorporating an International Cycling Competition: A Multimodal Intervention Model for Physical, Psychological, And Social Wellbeing in Residential Aged Care', *BMC Geriatrics*, vol.24, no.435.