



Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

General Communication

Dear Residents, representatives & staff,

Victoria's high coronavirus case numbers and a rising death rate has led the Government to impose stage four restrictions across Melbourne, which include a curfew and restrictions on movement across the city. The Victoria Premier has declared we are in a State of Disaster which will remain until 13 September 2020.

The wearing of facemasks across the whole of Victoria is mandatory from today, Monday 3 August 2020. Regional Victoria will be under stage three restrictions — meaning there are only four main reasons to leave home — from Thursday 6 August 2020.

1. To attend work
2. Shop for food and essentials
3. If you are a caregiver or to receive care
4. To exercise

All primary and secondary school children will commence remote learning from Wednesday 5 August 2020.

At Yallambee we have always shown an abundance of caution in our response to the COVID-19 Pandemic to ensure the safety of our residents and staff.

Therefore, the Outbreak Management Team will now implement restrictions within our home that will remain in place until 13 September 2020. These restrictions will allow us to quickly respond and enact our Outbreak Management Plan if we have a confirmed case of COVID-19 amongst residents, staff or visitor.

STRINGENT VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

Visits will continue for those families whose loved one is nearing the end of their life. The visits will be restricted to two family members at a time and we ask that the primary nominated representative provides us with a list of those that are approved to visit. These visits will need to be scheduled to allow us to have staff available to undertake the screening.

Visits are strictly two at a time within our home as per the Commonwealth guidelines around access visits to Residential Aged Care. We ask you to consider not bringing children in under 16, as the wearing of PPE could be difficult and confronting. Children if brought in will be counted as one of the visitors.

Compassionate visits (one nominated person) will continue only for those residents that require additional physical, mental and emotional care and support. Visits must be for the benefit of our residents and we encourage our families to utilise Facetime or phone calls to connect with loved ones.

These will be pre booked via reception once approved by the OMT.

All visitors to our home will be required to wear full PPE which includes gown, mask and gloves.

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INTERNAL LOCKDOWN

Residents will remain within their designated house during this lockdown, they will be able to seek fresh air outside within the garden but social distancing must be maintained between residents at all times.

When a resident is a SUSPECTED CASE, pending results of COVID-19 swab they will be nursed as if they are a CONFIRMED CASE. We will require all of the residents within that house to isolate within their room until we receive a negative result, this will allow us to protect our residents and undertake a deep clean of the area.

Staff within that house will wear full PPE when caring for all residents.

All clinical and non-clinical staff will be allocated to the same area while working consecutive shifts, if unable due to staffing mix a second house only may be allocated.

DELIVERIES

From Monday 3 August 2020 we ask all family and friends to cease deliveries unless they are essential, we must be able to wipe down the surface of the items ensuring that the virus has no chance of being transported into the home.

Deliveries must be completely sealed and able to be sanitised.

Due to the increased workload on our staff and the risk of the virus being brought into our home we ask that families consider what is essential before dropping items off. All mail and papers will continue to be distributed.

Drop off times daily between 10am – 2pm

All urgent deliveries of essential items will be accepted outside of those times.

CONTACT

We ask all family and friends of our residents to respect our restrictions and refrain from gathering at our external fences, requesting residents to meet them outside to wave and chat or even pass deliveries through or over fence. At this time when we have community transmission within our local area the potential contact places our residents at risk. We have also had a resident fall after going outside the building unsupervised to chat over the fence with a family member.

We ask families and friends to understand that we can only discuss the health of our residents with their nominated representative. The volume of phone calls making general enquires has increased significantly and we want to give you as much information as possible but our Nursing team will only be available to answer calls from the nominated representatives.

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HOW WE WILL COMMUNICATE DURING THE PANEMIC

IF A RESIDENT IS A SUSPECTED CASE

If a resident becomes unwell and develops symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 they are required under the Public Health Act to undergo a COVID-19 swab to determine if the virus is present.

We will advise the resident (if appropriate) and contact the nominated representative of the resident to advise that they are currently experiencing symptoms and as a precautionary measure, we take a test to determine what is causing the symptoms and also exclude Covid-19. That test is a swab which is sent to pathology for testing. The results may take up to 3-4 days.

Until we get the results back the resident and all residents within that house must remain in their rooms and unfortunately, we will not be able to permit visitors to attend (end of life will continue). We will keep you updated and connected as best we can.

When we ask someone to remain in their room, whilst awaiting this test, we do change some of our practices;

- place a reminder sign on the door
- put things outside the room
- ask staff to wear gowns, gloves and masks and now face shields when entering the room. We call this PPE, a term you are probably familiar with.
- disposable crockery and cutlery is used.

We can assure you that we continue to provide all the care and support our residents need during this unusual time. We will discuss the symptoms with their doctor and with the resident and gain consent from them to have taken that test. It involves a swab up the nose, and sometimes in the throat. It is uncomfortable but it's done very quickly by our own nursing staff. The Registered Nurse will advise of the test results as soon as we have them available.

IF A RESIDENT IS A CONFIRMED CASE

The resident and nominated representative will already be awaiting the pathology results and we have already instigated the above outbreak management procedures since onset of symptoms. The Registered Nurse will advise both resident and nominated representative that they have tested positive for the Covid-19 virus. They will discuss with doctor and resident may be transferred to hospital. Unfortunately, nobody will be able to visit the home during this time, this includes for compassionate and end of life care.



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IN THE EVENT A RESIDENT, STAFF OR VISITOR IS A CONFIRMED CASE

We will activate our Outbreak Management Action Plan:

- Notify the Public Health Unit and the Department of Health and Human Services, we are also obliged to contact the Commonwealth Department of Health
- Lockdown the home completely and remove any non-essential visitors
- Inform all residents and phone all representatives within the house that the confirmed case resides
- Inform all residents in person and advise all nominated representatives, staff and key stakeholders via email that we have a confirmed case of COVID-19 within our home within the first hour.
- Notify all nominated representatives via phone within the first 6 hours.
- Collect critical information and contact tracing records
- Implement enhanced surveillance and monitoring of all residents to detect further cases early
- All staff and residents will undertake a COVID-19 test
- Provide daily updates to all residents, nominated representatives, staff and key stakeholders via email or phone.

Yallambee's COVID-19 Pandemic Plan was prepared in early March 2020, and is updated following any change made at our daily OMT meetings and to reflect new government advice as it has been put in place. Our plan includes:

- Stringent screening processes for all staff, visitors and residents that enter our home
- Regular simulations of an infectious outbreak to monitor our practice and ensure procedures are effective
- Implementing zoning protocols for both staff and equipment throughout the Home to separate different areas and isolate potential risks
- Staff adhering to strict infection control processes and receiving regular education and training to reinforce processes
- Full use of PPE gear, including face masks, face shields, gowns and gloves
- Regular replenishing of PPE for our warehouse and maintaining of a separate PANDEMIC STOCKPILE for use only in the event of an outbreak.

If you have any questions regarding our COVID-19 response please contact Jackie Northe via jackie.northe@yallambee.com.au or info@yallambee.com.au

Thank you for your support
Outbreak Management Team
4 August 2020

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