



Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

General Communication

Yallambee's Outbreak Management Team has issued the following response to Prime Minister Scott Morrison's call for a loosening of restricted visitation within Residential Aged Care Services.

Dear Residents, families and representatives and staff of Yallambee,

The Aged Care Sector is firm in their support that we continue to take a precautionary approach to visitor restrictions in residential aged care, with the protection of residents and staff from COVID-19 being a critical priority.

We have been side by side with our residents and their families throughout this crisis, working tirelessly to protect them from infection, soothe their anxiety and support their physical, social and emotional needs as best we can.

We are acutely aware of the stress and pressure visitor restrictions and other infection control measures have placed on residents, families and staff. Decisions to implement these measures are not taken lightly and are in place with the specific intent to save lives.

If we were to allow two visitors per resident per day into Margery Cole, we would have in excess of two hundred and sixteen (216) visitors from the community through our doors every day. All of these visitors would need to be screened and temperature checked, have had their influenza vaccination and provide evidence of such, be provided with personal, protective equipment (PPE), which is still in short supply throughout Australia and be escorted by a staff member through our building and past yours or your loved ones bedroom.

We have seen the tragic loss of lives in some residential care facilities in Australia to coronavirus, the vigilance of the aged care sector has seen those numbers of infection rates experienced by residents and staff remain low to date.

This is due to a singular focus on the health and wellbeing of those we care for.

We have been working with residents, families and advocates on ensuring their safety, whilst also being open to relaxing restrictions on a case-by-case basis based on compassionate grounds.



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The feedback that we have had from our residents, families and friends is that you overwhelmingly support the measures we have put in place, given the risk to the vulnerable older members of our community you have entrusted in our care.

Through a survey that will be distributed to our residents, families and staff this week, you will have the opportunity to provide us with your individual feedback around our response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

We believe that going beyond the official guidance and our early response has significantly reduced the risk of an outbreak within Margery Cole.

If a resident or their family member or advocate feels that Yallambee is being unreasonable with regards to restricted visitation measures, then we are happy to discuss that directly with you. If this is not satisfactorily resolved, then the Older Persons Advocacy Network or the Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission can be contacted to assist further.

Yallambee as a responsible provider of Residential Aged Care Services are on maximum alert and this has seen us investing strongly in screening of our workforce and any authorised visitors, providing protective equipment and escalated infection controls, providing additional staffing, and introducing technology and systems to ensure family and community connections are maintained, alongside continuing to maintain our high standards in care quality.

This is a time when we all need to work together to protect each other from COVID-19, especially those older Australians in our communities who are most at risk.

These are very difficult circumstances and we, like all of you look forward to the gradual lifting of restrictions within our home and the wider community.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for our wonderful residents, they have been resilient and patient during this crisis and adapted remarkably well and should be praised for their efforts.

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