

1 May 2020

Dear members of the Bethany Christian Care Family

COVID-19 UPDATE

Visiting recommences in aged care

Limited visiting to residents in our aged care facilities recommences today. Many relatives of our residents have already booked a visit. I trust that these face-to-face visits will be a blessing to all involved.

Remember that you need to book your visit at least one day in advance using our online visitor booking system at: <http://www.bethanycc.org.au/links/visiting.aspx>. If you do not have access to the internet, please call reception at the site you wish to visit to make a booking.

Flu vaccination requirement

It is now a legal requirement that no one may enter an aged care facility unless they have *“an up to date vaccination against influenza, if the vaccination is available to the person”*. This applies to staff and visitors. It does not apply to residents of aged care facilities.

The Chief Health Officer’s direction only gives one example of why a vaccination is not available to a person – that is, *“the vaccination is not available to a person with a medical contraindication to the influenza vaccine”*.

Visitors will need to provide proof of vaccination or a doctor’s letter confirming the vaccination is not available to them. Our online visitor booking system asks you to upload those documents.

Changes to social distancing rules

The Queensland Government has announced that from Saturday 2 May there will be some changes to social distancing rules. Up to date social distancing rules are explained here: https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0037/955882/home-confinement-qas.pdf

In particular, the Queensland Government's website (<https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/gatherings>) says:

"In addition to leaving your house for essential purposes, from Saturday May 2, you may also leave for recreational purposes.

This means from Saturday, May 2, you can:

- *Go for a drive (teach a learner driver from your household)*
- *Ride a motorbike*
- *Have a picnic*
- *Visit a national park*
- *Shop in places already open*
- *Fish*
- *Go boating*

But there are three conditions:

1. *You must practice social distancing and stay 1.5m from others and hygiene must be maintained;*
2. *You must only be joined by the people who usually live with you or one other person who doesn't live with you*
3. *You must stay within 50km of your home*

We strongly urge people aged over 70, anybody over 65 with a chronic disease, and Indigenous people over 50 to stay at home for their own protection."

No changes to retirement village social distancing restrictions

The most recent changes to social distancing rules have not relaxed the social distancing restrictions in place at our retirement villages.

- *Libraries* – All village libraries remain closed until further notice.
- *Pools and spas* – The pool at The Plains and the spa at Janoah Gardens remain closed until further notice.
- *Village recreation halls* – These remain closed until further notice.
- *Playground* – The playground at The Plains remains closed until further notice
- *Village buses* – Village bus trips remain cancelled until further notice.

Conclusion

The welfare, health and safety of our residents and staff is our top priority. At all times, our decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic seek to faithfully achieve that priority.

Please remember, if you don't absolutely have to visit in person in an aged care facility, please don't. Together we can reduce the risk of COVID-19 to our residents and staff.

If you have any concerns or wish to discuss this issue further, please contact Bethany Christian Care Head Office (07 3737 5080; bethany@bethanycc.org.au).

I am thankful for your continued prayers for all the Bethany Christian Care Family.

Kind regards,



Rohan Reid
CEO