

18 June 2020

Dear members of the Bethany Christian Care Family

COVID-19 UPDATE

Changes to aged care restrictions

Yesterday the Chief Health Officer made a new Aged Care Direction (sixth version), which loosens some of the restrictions for visiting and leaving aged care facilities. It's good to see restrictions in aged care loosening as the pandemic situation improves in Queensland.

A copy of the direction can be found here: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/legislation/cho-public-health-directions-under-expanded-public-health-act-powers/aged-care>

What has changed?

Entering aged care facilities to visit residents

- Residents can have up to two visitors at any one time.
- There is no limit on the number of visits allowed in a day or the length of each visit.
- Children under the age of 16 years are now able to visit.

Aged care residents leaving the facility

Residents may now leave their residential aged care facility for a range of reasons, including:

- Exercise.
- Attending small family gatherings of up to 20 people (as long as physical distancing can be maintained).
- Receiving or accessing health care.
- Visiting a service provider, including hairdressers and beauty therapists, and legal advisors.
- Attending a funeral.
- Visiting another residential aged care facility.

Residents who are part of a family group (e.g. couples or siblings) or close friends can leave the facility together. However, groups of residents cannot go on external excursions (e.g. a group of residents cannot be taken on a day trip to the beach).

Bethany Christian Care is a not-for-profit organisation. To benefit our residents:

- Donations are tax deductible
- Our investment fund is exempt from the Centrelink/ Veterans' Affairs deeming provisions
- We are thankful for bequests.

333 Underwood Road, EIGHT MILE PLAINS, QLD 4113 ☎ (07) 3737 5080 📠 (07) 3841 5088 ✉ bethany@bethanycc.org.au ABN 28 041 667 312
www.bethanycc.org.au

"Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2

What hasn't changed?

All visitors to aged care facilities still need to have a current influenza vaccination, if it is available to them. Visitors will still need to book a visiting time and sign in at reception so they can answer required COVID-19 screening questions. Visitors will also still need to avoid common areas of the aged care facility and visit a resident in their room or outdoors.

When will the changes take effect?

I hope that the changes will be able to take effect next week. I will send another letter shortly with more details about when and how the changes will take effect.

Why aren't the changes taking effect today?

We need some time to implement these changes, to ensure residents and their loved ones are able to make the most of them, while still keeping each of our residents safe. This includes:

- Updating our booking system to allow for multiple visits to a resident each day, and longer visits.
- Creating a way for friends or relatives to book an excursion with a resident.
- Reviewing how we assess residents returning from an excursion.
- Revising procedures for residents who would like to go on an excursion on their own.

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. 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