

31 July 2020

Dear members of the Bethany Christian Care Family

COVID-19 UPDATE – AGED CARE FACILITIES IN RESTRICTED AREAS

New Directions from Chief Health Officer

The Chief Health Officer has issued two new legally binding Directions relating to aged care facilities. Both Directions are available on the Queensland Health website, if you would like to read them for yourself.

There is a new Direction defining “restricted areas”. Restricted areas are specified suburbs/postcodes. Each of our three aged care facilities (Beth Eden, The Plains and Janoah gardens) is in a restricted area.

There is also a new Aged Care Direction (No. 8). This new Direction sets out specific new requirements for aged care facilities in restricted areas.

Precautionary measures

I note that at this time there are no known COVID infections among our residents or staff.

I commend the Chief Health Officer for making these new Directions. The spread of COVID in aged care facilities in Victoria is deeply saddening, and these precautionary measures are designed to help Queensland aged care facilities avoid the same situation.

Visiting and excursion changes

Because our three aged care facilities are in restricted areas there will be no visits to residents by relatives or friends, except for end of life visits.

Because our three aged care facilities are in restricted areas, residents are not allowed to leave the facility except:

- To receive or access health care; or
- To attend a funeral; or
- In the case of emergency; or
- Residents may apply to the Chief Health Officer for an exemption to leave the aged care facility on compassionate grounds.

Virtual visiting

Virtual visiting is still available as a way to keep in touch with residents. If you would like to book a virtual visit you can do so through our website.

Workforce changes

Because our three aged care facilities are in restricted areas, we are required to implement a Workforce Management Plan. This plan is to ensure, to the extent reasonably practicable, that staff do not work across multiple aged care facilities. Any staff that work across multiple facilities have to wear full PPE. We have already implemented a Workforce Management Plan.

Wearing masks

Because our three aged care facilities are in restricted areas, any person who enters the aged care facility must wear a single use surgical face mask. We have already implemented this. The requirement to wear a face mask does not apply to residents, though from time to time residents may be asked to wear a face mask (for example, if they are in quarantine).

Changeable situation

As we have seen with the COVID situation in Victoria and New South Wales things can change very quickly. We are continuing to monitor and respond to the changing situation. We do not know when visiting and excursions will recommence but will continue to keep you updated about further changes as they occur.

Again, I note that at this time there are no known COVID infections among our residents or staff.

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