

TO: RCH RESIDENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

FROM: CEO – Graham Reed

DATE: 24th April 2020

This week we have heard from the Prime Minister, the Chief Medical Officer and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, all expressing concern that aged care providers are unnecessarily preventing residents from seeing their loved ones.

It is unfortunate that the decision made by the majority of residential aged care providers across the country to restrict access to loved ones entering residential care homes has been characterised as an unnecessary imposition on residents and families.

I acknowledge that this has been a particularly difficult time for residents and families, however, the reality is that physical isolation continues to be the most effective way of minimising the danger of an outbreak of COVID-19 in residential aged care homes and is therefore the best way of keeping residents safe.

LHI's Pandemic Response Team met today and agreed how to safely ease the restrictions on visits for family members of residents without compromising the health and safety of residents and staff.

Agreement was reached that the following conditions on visitor access will apply effective from next **Wednesday, 29th April**.

Consistent with the SA Department of Health Directive, anyone visiting a resident living in our residential care homes at Hope Valley and Glynde will need to comply with the following requirements:

- Visits should be limited to a short duration – 30 minutes maximum
- Only one social support visit is permitted per day, of one person or two persons visiting together. These visitors may include immediate social supports (for example, family members or close friends) or advocacy support
- Visits should be conducted in the resident's room, outdoors, or in a specific area designated within each home, rather than communal areas
- Social distancing of 1.5 metres should be adhered to wherever possible
- Cough etiquette and thorough hand hygiene practices should be followed at all times.

Visiting hours will be limited to the following hours:

- Monday to Friday – 10 am to 12 noon and 1 pm to 3 pm
- Saturday 9 am to 12 noon
- Sunday 1 pm to 4 pm

In addition, prior to entry, all visitors will have their temperature checked and be required to sign a declaration that they:

- Have not returned from outside of South Australia (whether from overseas or interstate) in the last 14 days
- Have not been in known contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days (except in circumstances where adequate PPE was worn)
- Have not had a fever (>38 degrees) or symptoms of acute respiratory infection
- Have had the 2020 seasonal influenza vaccination – (documented evidence will need to be sighted).

The visiting hours and conditions for the purpose of providing end of life care to a resident are negotiable and this should be discussed with Yasmine Ruysen or Megan Britt.

As previously advised, children under the age of 16 years are not able to visit unless the visit is for the purpose of providing end of life support.

Please also be aware that any resident who leaves the residential care home will not be allowed to re-enter the home, subject to the following exceptions:

- To seek medical or dental treatment
- To attend the funeral of a member of their immediate family
- The resident has dementia or another cognitive impairment and inadvertently leaves the home without understanding the SA Health Direction or the consequences of leaving
- The resident would have no safe alternative accommodation.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone for your patience with us as we navigate through these challenging and changing conditions. Most of us just want to get back to normal, however, this will only happen if we continue to follow the advice of our Health Professionals. Our State is doing extremely well – we need to be vigilant to keep it that way.

Graham Reed
CEO