



**LHI**  
RETIREMENT  
SERVICES

## **MEDIA RELEASE – COVID-19 Precautions**

**TO: LHI RESIDENTS AND RCH FAMILY MEMBERS**

**FROM: CEO**

**DATE: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

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The purpose of this advice is to confirm the preparation and precautions that we are implementing within LHI to ensure services operated by LHI are well placed to manage through this period of elevated risk of an outbreak of the COVID–19 virus.

It is a reality that COVID-19 represents a very real threat to health and safety of staff, residents, visitors and consumers within the LHI community, particularly those living in our residential care homes.

Our approach at this time, is to do everything possible to minimize the likelihood that anyone within the LHI community contracts the virus from an outside source.

I am aware as I provide this advice that there is a heightened level of anxiety within the community generally around the possible implications of a widespread outbreak of COVID-19 in Australia. All of the advice we are receiving currently is that prevention is better than cure. That is, now is the time to reduce the likelihood of any resident or staff member being exposed to the virus.

LHI is adopting a two stage process to safeguard residents, visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors:

### **Advice applicable to both Residential Care Homes**

**Stage 1** to be implemented from 8 am Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 where we encourage resident's family members to consider deferring visits to their loved one until further notice.

This stage is not a blanket ban on all visitors, however, it will require all visitors (including volunteers) to only enter the home through a designated entry point where they will be requested to confirm on arrival that they:

- have not returned from overseas in the past two weeks
- have not had close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19
- do not have a fever or a cough
- will practice social distancing, cough etiquette, and routine hand sanitizing when visiting the home

Stage 1 will also include a limitation on large group gatherings/meetings/activities within the home where social distancing cannot be assured.

Kafé Schulze will continue to operate however the Kafé will only be open between 10 am and 2 pm daily. Banking services, Hairdresser and Allied Health services will also continue to operate but with access restricted to the designated access points and all patrons and contractors will be required to sign an entry declaration.

**Stage 2** – full lockdown of both homes will be activated immediately when recommended by the Department of Health.

This stage will prevent visitors from entering the home unless approved by the General Manager Residential Care under exceptional circumstances.

### **Advice applicable to both Retirement Village Communities**

Stage 1 to be implemented from 8 am Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 will involve the cancellation of all large, non-essential group activities and meetings including; Bright Hour, Resident Meetings, Dinners and Functions.

The Hope Valley Village coffee shop will continue to operate during Stage 1. Small group gatherings up to 20 will continue to meet.

### **Advice applicable to Home Care Consumers**

Services to consumers living in their own unit/house will continue to operate as normal with LHI staff attending to these services having been trained in infection control protocols including the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for any individual showing symptoms of being unwell.

### **Advice applicable to Hope Valley McLaren Apartment residents**

McLaren residents will be able to move freely in and out of their apartment although access to the RCH will be restricted to the designated entrance.

### **Closing comment**

Finally, I would like to provide the following assurances to everyone within the LHI Community. As of today, no resident, staff member or volunteer at LHI has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.

Unlike other sectors, aged care is well aware of correct protocols for “Outbreak Management”. At LHI, we have a good track record of effectively managing outbreaks when they have occurred in the past.

We also know from previous outbreaks, that the source of an outbreak has been linked to visitors, contractors, staff or volunteers attending the workplace infected with the virus; hence the steps we have taken to remind staff, volunteers and visitors of their responsibility to follow any instructions including access limitations as and when they are imposed.

We will continue to keep you updated with any new developments and thank you in advance for your cooperation with any restrictions that are imposed.

This advice and future updates will be provided in the “What’s Happening at LHI” tab within the “About Us” tab on our website. Additional Information on the COVID-19 situation is also available on the Commonwealth Health Department web link below. This information is updated regularly.

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

Relevant advice on what you can do to protect yourself and information related to testing in South Australia is available on the following web links:

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+topics/health+topics+a+-+z/covid+2019/community/information+for+the+community+-+covid-19>

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+topics/health+topics+a+-+z/covid+2019/covid-19+response/covid-19+clinics+and+testing+centres>

**Graham Reed**