

**TO: RCH RESIDENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS**

**FROM: CEO – Graham Reed**

**DATE: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

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A week on from my previous Bulletin and it would appear that, based on the statistics, we are living in one of the best states in the best country in the world. The news from our Health Authorities is encouraging that the measures put in place across the nation to reduce the spread of the coronavirus appear to be working.

Whilst there is an air of optimism about the reduction in the number of new cases of COVID-19 being detected each day, the prevailing message is we still have a long way to go before we will see many of the restrictions that have been imposed on all of us lifted.

I recognise that being isolated from family and friends is probably one of the biggest challenges residents living in our residential care homes at Hope Valley and Glynde are facing. The restrictions are tough on everyone, but particularly those in our community who are no longer free to come and go as they want. As I indicated last week, the SA Department of Health directive now prevents residents living in residential care homes from leaving the home unless they need to attend a medical or dental appointment.

Personally, I appreciate just how hard these restrictions are on residents but also families who understandably worry about how their mum, dad, brother or sister is doing. At the same time, I am acutely aware of the risk to residents from this virus – a virus that is highly infectious and can remain undetected in infected individuals. As the virus presents as mild or no symptoms for most people, the advice is simple, behave like we have the virus and our aim is not to spread it.

The plea from the health authorities is very clear. Stay home if you can (easy for residents not possible for staff), maintain social distancing and use good personal hygiene practices such as regular hand washing and cough etiquette.

It is pleasing to report that the LHI community is virus free and I am so thankful to our amazing, dedicated staff who are continuing to do a wonderful job of enhancing the well-being of every resident.

Please continue to work with our lifestyle staff who are doing a wonderful job assisting residents to maintain contact with their families. We have dedicated iPads available for residents to access at both homes and our lifestyle staff can assist residents and families to connect using Skype, WhatsApp or Zoom.

A couple of brief snippets from one of our lifestyle team members at Hope Valley illustrates the impact connecting has on residents:

*... I facilitated a WhatsApp call between Bob and his daughter. She was delighted to have the opportunity to interact in this way and Bob enjoyed the visual sight of his daughter. I assisted a smooth running of the call and encouraged conversation from Bob.*

*... I visited Noel and was able to fix his telephone which he tells me has restricted him from speaking to his wife in a long time. Noel's wife was thankful for the intervention and pleased to speak to her husband. Noel was delighted and very emotional to be able to hear his wife's voice. I left the room as they continued their call.*

The lifestyle team from Glynde has taken happy hour to a whole new level with the introduction of the Jolly Trolley.

The trolley, loaded with sweet and savoury treats, soft drinks, beer and wine, brought a smile to everybody's face, especially when they found out it was free.



Gertrude, a resident at the Glynde RCH turned 99 yesterday (8<sup>th</sup> April). Shirley, a long-time friend and neighbour to Gertrude wanted to see her friend and wish her a happy birthday.

Lifestyle staff arranged for Gertrude to catch up with Shirley at the side door of Bates, at the required social distance of course. They waved to each other while Lifestyle staff and Shirley sang Happy Birthday. Shirley then dropped the card and flowers she had bought for Gertrude at Reception.

Today is a significant day in the church calendar known as Maundy Thursday; the day Jesus shared what would be his last supper with his disciples before his crucifixion. Jesus also used this last meeting with his disciples to wash their feet – an act of humility, service and love. This is a wonderful example of how we can demonstrate the love of God by serving others in our community at this most challenging of times.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone connected with the LHI community a Blessed Easter as you join together with loved ones (even if it is remotely) to give thanks that our God loves us and that He has promised to never leave us or forsake us.

This season will pass, and my sense is we will be stronger and less reliant on our wealth and possessions to give us what we need most in this life. We were created for relationship with God and with others; called to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. This is what gives life meaning and purpose.

**Graham Reed**