

Illawarra Diggers Family and Visitor COVID-19 Update

Thursday 11 November 2021

Dear Family Members and Visitors

RE:

- 1. Changes to Resident and Visitor Restrictions in NSW Residential Aged Care;**
- 2. 3rd/Booster Doses; and**
- 3. Vaccination Certificates**

1. Resident and Visitor Restrictions

Residents

- Residents are permitted to leave the facility and attend small family gatherings but must abide by the current Public Health (COVID-19 Additional Restrictions for Delta Outbreak) Order (No 2) 2021

Resident Outings

Residents will be allowed to go out with families and friends. There are no restrictions on home gatherings with fully vaccinated attendees.

Families and friends are asked to declare at reception where the resident is going to and with whom so that we can track and record any issues that may arise more easily.

Visitors

As is being experienced in the broader community with increasing vaccination rates, NSW Health continue to revise the rules regarding Residential Aged Care.

- Residents are permitted to have two fully vaccinated visitors aged 12 and over, plus two children under 12 per day;
- Children under 12 are permitted to visit provided they are with a fully vaccinated person;
- Visits will continue to be in resident rooms rather than communal areas unless alternate arrangements are made with senior management.

Palliative and End of Life Care

- The Minister has made exemption to the 2 person per day restriction to allow additional visitors for end of life residents subject to:
 - No more than 4 people to visit at any one time;

- All visitors 12 years and over must wear a mask while in the facility but may remove the mask while directly interacting with the resident;
- There being minimal interaction between the visitors and the staff and other residents.

Visitors must not enter the home if they:

- Have COVID-19 symptoms;
- Are a close or casual contact of a person with confirmed COVID-19 unless they have completed their isolation and testing requirements;
- Have been overseas in the previous 14 days unless they have received the relevant negative tests as specified by NSW Health.

Visitors will still be required to undergo the screening process as before and will need to provide evidence of their vaccinations. Staff will need to sight the COVID certificate which includes the vaccination dates (these are included on the Australian Government COVID-19 Certificate).

As visitors will continue to need to be screened prior to entry, visitors are requested to ring ahead and arrange a time so that we can smooth the process in the foyer. If you do not ring ahead then you may be required to wait outside until you can be accommodated.

For this reason, visitor entry will still be restricted to between 8.30am and 4pm Monday to Sunday however once inside, visitors may stay as long as they want.

Access To and From Illawarra Diggers

Please be reminded that access **To** and **From** our home is strictly via the Main Entrance. This has not changed.

You will also need to use the NSW QR Code and show proof of using code on the NSW COVID App or sign in in the register. Only the main entrance has the provision for screening and signing in and out. This is a strict requirement imposed on Illawarra Diggers by NSW Health.

Some family members are exiting the home via the Woonona Door or the bottom car park lift. They have been observed by staff and also on CCTV. This means they are not signing out. Please assist us to maintain control of our home for the sake of our residents and other families. Please do the right thing as these rules are only put in place for the safety of our residents.

2. 3rd/Booster Dose of Pfizer

Drs Butler and Mitchell will be running a clinic on Saturday morning 4 December to provide booster shots to eligible residents and staff who had their second vaccination before 30 June 2021. Illawarra Diggers appreciates the GPs running this clinic as it will cover more than 70% of residents.

Smaller clinics will be run in conjunction with normal GP clinics on a Tuesday or Thursday as residents and staff become eligible.

3. Vaccination Certificates

Families are reminded that Illawarra diggers does not have access to resident Medicare or the immunisation register to be able to provide health department compliant COVID "Tick" certificates to allow residents to attend cafes etc. Families need to assist the residents to get this verification via Medicare or the Australian Immunisation register. If you need any further advice regarding this matter please contact our admin office to speak with Chloe Darragh or myself.

Finally, just pre-empting that a Relatives Survey will be coming out in the next few days from us. We went online with this survey last year and it enabled a better response from our families and persons responsible. I encourage you to complete this survey as we look at all feedback which helps to inform our care for all of our residents.

If you have any requests or suggestions relating to your family member during these easing visiting periods please contact our Lifestyle Team on their general email address at lifestyle@illawaradiggers.com.au;

If you have any questions relating to this advice, or for administrative issues relating to appointments or other matters, please contact admin@illawaradiggers.com.au or call on 02 4225 4700.

As previously advised, if you wish to **deliver anything** to your family, you will need to do so in office hours, **Monday to Sunday 8.30am to 4.30pm**. The office staff or Weekend Coordinator will accept the delivery and ensure it gets to your family member.

Please do not visit or deliver anything outside of these times as the admin office is not attended and care staff may be taken away from attending to residents to answer the door or they may not attend the front door if they are busy.

Should you require further information regarding COVID-19, please refer to the Commonwealth Department of Health website:

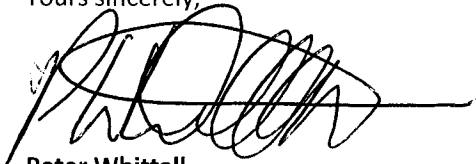
<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

and the NSW Health website which gives information specific to residential care in NSW:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/racf-latest-advice.aspx>

We will continue to update our procedures and protocols in line with government guidelines and to communicate with our residents and our families and Illawarra Diggers community.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Whittall
CEO