



## **Aged Care Outreach Service (ACOS)**

**Tuesday 8 August 2023**

### **Dear Family Members and Visitors**

I am writing to you today to provide some information about a new service which has commenced in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD). It is called the Aged Care Outreach Service or ACOS.

This service, which has been based on similar programs operating in other Local Health Districts, has been something Illawarra Diggers has been advocating for for quite some time. We believe this service will be of great benefit to our residents and, in the first month of operation, is already proving to be a great resource and support.

I have attached a flyer with some details of the service provided by the ISLHD team which will give you more detail of what the service involves.

In essence it is a team of very senior and experienced Registered Nurses, Clinical Nurse Consultants, Nurse Practitioners and Geriatricians based within the LHD but acting as a “flying gang” to respond to and attend residential aged care homes within the LHD area.

The service is initially available to us from 8am to 8pm, 7 days per week and the ACOS team will either assist our staff over the phone and help with decision making or attend to the resident in their room at Illawarra Diggers. They have a target to attend within 2 hours of receiving a call.

As Illawarra Diggers were part of the initial working party to develop the service in the Illawarra, we have been included in the pilot phase which commenced in July and will run for 6 months. Illawarra Diggers, Marco Polo Woonona (now IRT) and Warrigal are the trial sites. Following a successful pilot program, the service will eventually be rolled out to the whole of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District. The service is free for both phone and on-site attendances.


As the attached document notes, the service is designed to address matters such as deliriums, infections and symptoms of acute deterioration which otherwise may need to be transferred to hospital. Our main motivation for supporting the implementation of this program is to reduce hospitalisation of our residents and, where possible, have our residents treated in their room, in familiar surroundings and without the stress of hospital admission.

We have had occasion to utilise the ACOS team a number of times in the first month and they have been a wonderful team to work with. Very responsive, very knowledgeable and very caring.

NSW Health Minister and Member for Keira, The Hon. Ryan Park, will be attending Illawarra Diggers this Friday 11 August to launch the service in the Illawarra. We wanted to let you know of this new service being piloted at our home ahead of the Minister's media release.

If you have any questions about the ACOS program and how it is being rolled out please feel free to contact the ACOS team at [ISLHD-AgedCareOutreach@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ISLHD-AgedCareOutreach@health.nsw.gov.au) or Illawarra Diggers on 02 4225 4700 or email at [admin@illawarradiggers.com.au](mailto:admin@illawarradiggers.com.au).

Yours sincerely,



Peter Whittall  
CEO