



## **Illawarra Diggers Family and Visitor COVID-19 UPDATE**

**Friday 18 December 2020**

### **Dear Family Members and Visitors to Illawarra Diggers**

Merry Christmas to you all for next week.

On Wednesday 15 December the NSW Minister for Health issued Public Health (COVID-19 Aged Care Facilities) Order No4 2020. As you can see by the number this is the fourth such order this year and deals with restrictions in access to Aged Care homes in NSW.

As a result of this Order, the Minister has removed the requirement for visitors to aged care homes to have a current flu vaccination and has also removed the limit of a maximum of 2 people visiting at one time.

The Order does still require social distancing, pre-screening and other considerations and still makes the organisation responsible for ensuring compliance by staff, visitors and contractors etc.

With Christmas coming up this further relaxing of restrictions is good news for families and visitors generally.

So the arrangements contained in my previous letter dated 3 December will still be in place allowing for visitors Monday to Saturday from 8.30am with last entry at 4pm

In addition we will also allow visitors on the Public Holidays during the same hours of 8.30am to 4pm as for other days. These include visitors, as per the procedures specified below, on:

- Friday 25/12/20 – Christmas Day
- Saturday 26/12/20 – Boxing Day
- Monday 27/12/20 – Boxing Day Public Holiday
- Friday 1/1/21 – New Year's Day

A maximum of 4 visitors will now be permitted at one time with each resident so as to allow us to manage the incoming visitors for signing in and screening as well as maintaining social distancing in rooms etc,

From today, 18/12/2020 the following Level 1 strategies are in place:

#### **1. Residents Personal Outings**

Residents are able to come and go from the home to attend appointments, go for walks, drives with family, attend small family gatherings, go shopping, go for a meal etc etc etc.

When residents are leaving the home with family or friends they will need to complete the same risk form we have been using for some time. This will enable us to track any infection control issues.

#### **2. No Isolation Following Outings**

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## **2. No Isolation Following Outings**

Unless the resident has been to hospital and been admitted, they will not need to isolate when they return. We will monitor them for symptoms and respond accordingly.

Residents who are admitted to hospital will be required to be isolated for 24 hours on return as per normal pre-COVID procedures.

## **3. Resident Group Outings**

Resident outings/bus trips etc are recommencing to appropriate venues and destinations.

## **4. Pre-screening upon entry**

All staff and visitors will continue to be required:

- To enter and leave the home only via the main entry door (all other entrances will remain locked)
- fill out the pre-screening questionnaire and be temperature checked prior to entry.

## **5. Masks**

Staff and visitors are NOT required to wear masks within the home or grounds. Families are requested to always consider good infection control protocols and are encouraged to wear a mask if there is any concern of infection transfer.

## **6. Visits Monday to Saturday**

Due to the need to pre-screen all visitors, the following visitor arrangements will still apply for entry between **8.30am to 4.00pm Monday to Saturday** so that staff can be available to receive visitors.

Visitors are allowed to visit residents:

- In residents' rooms
- On the verandas
- In the screened meeting room adjacent to the main dining room

Visits will still not be allowed in common rooms/lounges/dining rooms etc.

We are aware that some visitors have previously got to know other residents at Illawarra Diggers. Under these Level 1 restrictions, visitors are to go directly to their nominated resident's room and are not to go to the room of other residents or to common areas other than to pass through.

As above, the Public Health Order has removed the limit of two visitors at any one time. To manage visits safely, Illawarra Diggers has placed a maximum of 4 visitors at any one time per resident space (ie husband and wife residents cannot have 8 visitors in the one room with them) but no daily maximum.

Visits will continue in the designated **Visitor Room Monday to Saturday** as per appointment if families choose to use this option.

On weekends residents are able to leave the home to go out with visitors as above but staffing prevents us from being able to offer scheduled visits at our home on weekends at present.

## 7. Specific Needs Residents

As always, we are very happy to discuss specific needs for individuals, both residents and families, so please do not hesitate to contact us at any time to discuss any concerns or requests you may have.

If you have any requests or suggestions please contact Vikki, Debra, Kayleigh or Sophie on their general email address at [lifestyle@illawaradiggers.com.au](mailto:lifestyle@illawaradiggers.com.au);

For administrative issues relating to appointments or other matters please contact [admin@illawarradiggers.com.au](mailto:admin@illawarradiggers.com.au).

### Visitors to Illawarra Diggers - Ongoing

1. The home remains closed to all unauthorised and or unscheduled visitors outside of the prescribed times;
2. This will be reviewed on a daily basis with updated information from various agencies to ensure the health and wellbeing of our residents and staff;
3. We will communicate with families and residents regularly to update everyone on any changes;
4. We will continue to assess each special request case on its merits so as to ensure we keep the physical and spiritual health of our residents as our primary consideration.

### Resident Appointments - Ongoing

1. We will continue to facilitate residents attending external medical and health related appointments that need to be attended;
2. Families need to advise the office prior to the appointment date and make the necessary arrangements, including date, time, location and duration of the appointment and a list of names and contact details of anyone who will accompany the resident.
3. Families accompanying residents are asked to consider wearing a mask to provide additional protection to our vulnerable residents.

As previously advised, if you wish to deliver anything to your family, you will need to do so in office hours, Monday to Saturday 8.30am to 4.30pm. The office staff will either accept the delivery and ensure it gets to your family member or you may deliver it yourself following the appropriate screening and sign-in.

Please do not 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.

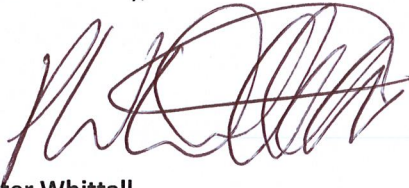
Should you require further information regarding COVID-19, please refer to the Commonwealth Department of Health website:

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

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.

As always, Illawarra Diggers will continue comply with all government directives and to make informed conservative decisions to ensure the best outcome for our residents and staff.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Peter Whittall', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

**Peter Whittall**  
CEO  
Illawarra Diggers Aged and Community Care