

## Illawarra Diggers Family and Visitor COVID-19 UPDATE

Friday 26 March 2021

Dear Family Members

### RE: Pfizer BioNTech Vaccine Rollout and Changed Visitor Arrangements

We are again very pleased to be able to report that the second phase of the Pfizer vaccination program occurred on Tuesday 23 March as expected. Sonic again did a great job on the day and our Care and Lifestyle staff ran a very efficient clinic to ensure it all ran smoothly.

It was expected that the second vaccine may cause some increased reactions compared with the first vaccination. In the first phase, one staff member had a minor reaction but no residents.

We have noted with the second vaccine, one resident has had some swelling and redness around the injection site on the upper arm and a number of staff have reported some soreness and swelling at the vaccine site, but no significant issues.

Staff who have not yet been vaccinated will be able to access the vaccine at the GP clinics as well as special hubs which will be established in early April. We are not expecting Sonic back on site at this stage but this may change.

#### Ongoing Visits – Now Available 7 days

With the easing of restrictions across the state we are now extending our visiting to **7 days per week**, including this coming weekend and all subsequent weeks, including public holidays.

As visitors will continue to need to be screened prior to entry, visitors will be required 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.

The Dept of Health still holds our home accountable for ensuring all staff and visitors entering the home comply with the screening requirements. Therefore we must roster additional staff to cover this requirement and cannot just allow self check-in/sign-in.

As in the past, if a resident is in specific need of family visits (palliative, behavioural) then families should contact us to discuss specific needs outside of the stated visiting hours which will in most circumstances will be accommodated.

## **Resident Outings**

As per the previously advised requirements, residents are allowed to go out with families and friends. From Monday 29 March we understand there will be no restrictions on events and gatherings in NSW, which is fantastic.

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 more easily.

If you have any questions relating to this advice, or for administrative issues relating to appointments or other matters, please contact [admin@illawarradiggers.com.au](mailto:admin@illawarradiggers.com.au) or call on 02 4225 4700.

If you have any requests or suggestions relating to your family member during these restricted visiting periods please contact our Lifestyle Team on their general email address at [lifestyle@illawarradiggers.com.au](mailto:lifestyle@illawarradiggers.com.au);

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>

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