

Illawarra Diggers COVID-19 UPDATE: Tuesday 15 September 2020

Update Letter to Families and Visitors

Dear Family Member and Visitors to Illawarra Diggers

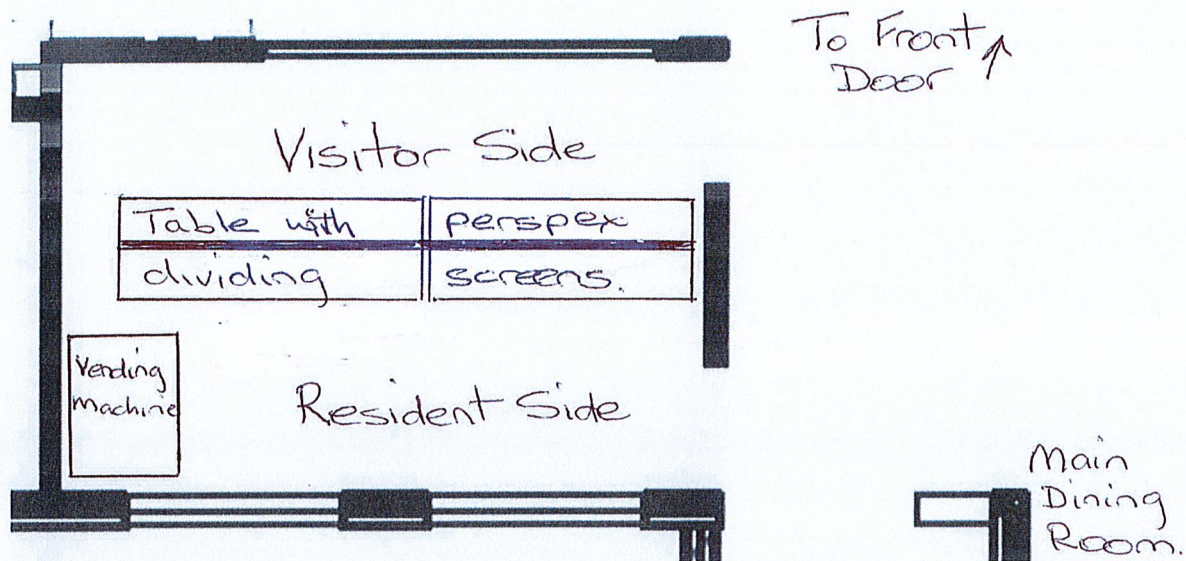
In response to the ongoing needs of both our residents and their families and friends to maintain connection, we have converted our activities room adjacent to the main dining room to a visitor room.

On Monday 14 September, I met with our residents to discuss this option and to get their support for this proposal as it does have the consequence of taking away one of their common areas so it can be used for this purpose.

The room is set up with a separate access for visitors and residents. Down the middle of the room are two long tables with an 800mm high Perspex screen running the full length.

This system will work if visitors comply with the conditions that unfortunately we will need to put in. Visitors will need to book a date and time for their visit.

1. State legislation limits the number of visitors to two.
2. Families can make one booking in a week and only have one reservation open at one time (ie not make a block booking for every Tuesday at 10am for example). This will make it fairer for all residents and their families to have an opportunity.
3. Visits will be Monday to Friday only as we cannot support this additional process on the weekend at this stage.
4. Bookings will initially be limited to 45 minutes to allow for room cleaning between visitors.
5. Booking times will be:
 - 9.15am – 10am
 - 10.15am – 11am
 - 11.15am – 12 midday
 - 1.15pm – 2pm
 - 2.15pm – 3pm
 - 3.15pm – 4pm
6. All visitors will need to provide evidence of current flu vaccine and to meet the entry criteria as set out by NSW Health in the COVID-19 questionnaire.
7. Visitors will need to be considerate of other families and residents and keep to the allocated time.
8. All bookings to be made via the front office during business hours 8.30am – 4.30pm Monday to Friday.



We will review how this all works for all parties and make any modifications that are needed.

The risk of a COVID-19 outbreak has not diminished and the list of hotspots around Sydney and the suburbs continues to grow. For all of us, in our community and especially in residential care this pandemic remains a very real potential risk to our residents.

As always, we are very happy to discuss specific needs for individuals 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;

For administrative issues relating to appointments or other matters please contact admin@illawarradiggers.com.au.

Visitors to Illawarra Diggers - Ongoing

1. The home remains closed to all unauthorised and or unscheduled visitors;
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. I will communicate with families and residents every two weeks to update everyone on any changes;
4. As soon as we are able to re-open to visitors or to change our visiting and outing procedures, we will communicate this to families immediately;
5. 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. Please be aware that if the correct procedure is not followed i.e. if the appointment forms are not filled out or the residents does more than just attend the appointment without full disclosure then, for the protection of the other residents and staff, the resident may be required to remain in isolation for up to 14 days on return, which absolutely none of us wants.
4. Families accompanying residents are asked to consider wearing a mask to provide additional protection to our vulnerable residents.

Staff Procedures - Ongoing

In line with aged care facilities in the affected zones close to Wollongong and also consistent with all state run facilities and aged care homes in NSW, from Monday 3 August our staff have been required to:

1. Complete a full disclosure questionnaire when they start each shift and have their temperatures taken and recorded by another, designated staff member;
2. Wear surgical face masks in all common areas and resident private areas where there is likelihood of encountering a resident. At present staff will be permitted to remove their masks when in care stations and offices provided they are able to maintain safe distancing.

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

Please do not deliver anything outside of these times as the admin office is not attended and care staff are taken away from attending to residents to answer the door.


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 long horizontal line extending to the right.

Peter Whittall

CEO

Illawarra Diggers Aged and Community Care