The Willows
PASTOR MARVEL SOMA

ISSUE 4 April 2020

# Whispers from the Willows NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our fourth newsletter to keep you updated on how your loved ones are doing during this time of the Coronavirus Pandemic. We miss our loved ones at The Willows Pine Rivers Nursing Home. We hope you enjoyed our first three newsletters. If you did not get to see them please click HERE, and it will take you to our website where you can find all previous newsletters.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO READ!!!**

**THIS NEWSLETTER WILL HAVE A SUBJECT MATTER THAT MAY BE DIFFERENT TO THE OTHERS SO THAT WE CAN BRING YOU SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS**
**PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CAREFULLY**
**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL FAMILIES**
**IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT INFORMATION FOR AGED CARE RESIDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

## FROM THE ADMIN DESK

The months are certainly flying by and the first quarter of this year is already done. We have been in lockdown for a month now and it seems like it is the new normal for us due to Coronavirus. We would like to thank you for your patience while we negotiate these very difficult times. We are monitoring the situation carefully and are updating our systems and procedures according to the instructions we are receiving from the Department of Health. Please know that our residents and staff are our number one priority.

Margaret Mead – Principal Contributor

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

# CORONAVIRUS

# FACT SHEET:

Coronavirus COVID-19

## FOR FAMILIES AND RESIDENTS ON RESTRICTED VISITS TO RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES

Older people are more susceptible to getting sick with COVID-19. The Australian Government has put a plan into restrictions to protect older Australians living in residential aged care facilities.

**Fri, 19 March 2020**

### WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause respiratory infections. These can range from the common cold to more serious diseases such as Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome and coronavirus. It was first reported in December 2019 in Wuhan City in China. It has now become a global pandemic.

### WHAT IS IT SPREAD?

The virus can spread from person to person through:

- close contact with an infectious person (including in the 24 hours before they started showing symptoms)
- contact with droplets from an infected person coughing or sneezing
- touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables) that have droplets on them from an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to colds and flus and can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath

While the COVID-19 virus is of serious concern, it is important to remember, at this stage, that most people displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or fatigue may be suffering from a flu, or another common illness, rather than COVID-19.

### WHY IS THIS VIRUS SO DANGEROUS FOR OLDER PEOPLE?

The rate of serious illness from COVID-19 increases with age. The highest rate of fatalities is among older people, particularly those with other serious health conditions or a weakened immune system. There is currently no cure or vaccine for COVID-19, or immunity in the community.

For people living with dementia or some form of cognitive impairment, the ability to follow instructions to prevent the spread of coronavirus may be impacted. This is particularly serious in where there is a need for capacity to communicate verbally or express pain and discomfort. To protect older Australians and people with compromised immune systems, we all need to work together to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

## FOR FAMILIES

### I HAVE A RELATIVE IN A RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITY. CAN I VISIT THEM?

It is important to keep up-to-date with and follow Australian Government advice. For the latest information, please visit www.health.gov.au/coronavirus.

The Australian Government has put restrictions in place to protect residents and workers in residential aged care facilities.

The following people will not be permitted entry to residential aged care facilities:

- People who have returned from overseas in the last 14 days
- People who have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- People with fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) in the last 14 days
- People who have not been vaccinated against influenza (from 1 April 2020)
- Children aged 16 years and under (exemptions can be assessed on a case-by-case basis, for example where the resident is a palliative care patient).

Care providers understand the difficulty that these new arrangements will pose for families and residents and have implemented other ways, especially when it relates to end-of-life situations, palliative care and dementia cases.

### HOW WILL MY VISIT BE DIFFERENT?

The new restrictions in place to protect your loved ones in care will likely mean changes in the way you go about your visit. These include:

- Limiting visits to a short duration
- Limiting visits to a maximum of two immediate social supports (family members, close friends) or professional service or volunteers at one time
- Conducting visits in a resident's room, outdoors, or in a specific area designated by the facility, to minimise the contact between people who are not a resident or employed by the facility
- Undergo a health screening ahead of a visit
- Practicing good hygiene and encouraging practice social distancing, including maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres.

### SHOULD I CONTINUE TO VISIT OLDER FRIENDS AND RELATIVES?

If you don't absolutely have to go to support a resident in care, please don't.

If you are able to, please consider ways to support your loved ones by phone or artwork, or like short videos to them. This will limit your exposure to COVID-19 and your chance of accidentally spreading it to the other older people in your life.

If you regularly visit someone living with a cognitive impairment, considering other ways of maintaining social contact will help reassure individuals who may feel anxious about people not visiting as they used to. This can be done through phone calls, letters, artwork, or short videos.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MY LOVED ONE IN AGED CARE?

Even if you are feeling well, it is important that you don't contribute to the spread of this virus. Good hygiene and taking care when interacting with other people is the best defence for you and your loved ones. This includes:

- Covering your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue
- Disposing of tissues immediately they are used, into a dedicated waste bin and washing your hands
- Washing your hands often with soap and water, including before and after eating and after using the toilet, touching your face, touching animals or other pieces
- Using alcohol-based hand sanitisers, where available
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces you have touched
- Where possible, keep 1.5 metres away from others as part of social distancing
- If you are sick, avoiding contact with others.

If you start to feel unwell, please the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080 or your GP who will be able to provide you with further advice. Older people aged 70+ (or 50+ for people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities) who are concerned about their health should contact their GP, Aboriginal Health Worker, multicultural coordinator, and telephone services. Examples of possible video applications include FaceTime and Skype. Medical practitioners will be able to provide advice on the best approach for your GP and their patients meet current standards and laws regarding privacy and information security.

## FOR RESIDENTS

### WHY CAN'T I SEE MY FAMILY?

Your family may limit their visits to help you keep safe.

In many circumstances you will be able to see some members of your close family. Visits will be limited to two people per visit and children aged 16 and not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances.

However, unless it's absolutely critical your visitors come to see you face to face, you should consider ways to keep in touch, such as by phone, Skype, or FaceTime.

These changes are designed to protect you and other residents from COVID-19.

### WHY CAN'T I SEE MY RELATIVES AGED 16 AND UNDER?

We understand this restriction will be difficult for some families. However, children are not permitted to visit residents in residential aged care facilities, except in cases of the spread of COVID-19.

### WHAT ABOUT PALLIATIVE CARE?

Providers are required to show compassion and make sensible decisions on a case-by-case basis, including in relation to children, for residents in palliative care.

### WILL THESE RESTRICTIONS EVER?

These are temporary changes and will be relaxed on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer and State and Territory Chief Health Officers. You should not think that these changes to be in place for a number of months.

### WHAT IF I'M BEING ADMITTED FROM ANOTHER FACILITY?

Screening for symptoms of COVID-19 in residents being admitted or re-admitted from other health facilities and community settings should be considered.

No new residents with symptoms of COVID-19 will be permitted to enter the facility.

### IS THERE A HOLIDAY FROM RESTRICTIONS WHILE I VISIT MY LOVED ONE?

The COVID-19 is a rapidly evolving health emergency. The situation is changing by the day – and further changes to restrictions will be made in line with medical advice.

## MORE INFORMATION

Some aged care providers are asking all visitors not to visit centres in order to protect the residents from the risk of COVID-19. Some providers are also asking people who have been in places for assessing, such as when a loved one is very unwell or in a palliative stage. Call ahead to check if you are able to visit. If you do visit, you will be asked to sign a form to say you have not contracted the Coronavirus or been in contact with someone who has. Call 1800 737 287 in the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822.

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au

The Australian Government's Coronavirus Information Line (1800 020 080) operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require interpreting or interpreting services, call 131 450.

The phone number of your state or territory public health agency is available at www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts

If you have concerns about your health, speak to a doctor.

If you, a family member or friend needs crisis support, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

Australian Government
Department of Health

COTA
For Older Australians

HELP STOP THE SPREAD
DON'T SPEAD THE HELP

## SOCIALISING OUTSIDE

## THIS MONTH'S RECIPE

**Betty's Garlic Mushroom Fry-up**
It's as simple as:
2 tablespoons of olive oil
1 clove garlic crushed
7 whole peeled garlic cloves
500g mushrooms
salt and pepper
Either fry in the frying pan and bake in the oven for 20 minutes
Great recipe for boosting the immune system of our residents and relatives as we go forward.

## TIME TO RELAX

# Easter Word Search

F L O W E R S G N I R P S Z O
S K C I N T C H E B P A R A D E
Y T P S Z E T M P M G E H Y S
D G X P H R I L L Y P A N S E
N E Z N R U A S U B T S P D A
A K O O A E D N N T D T P I R
X E T G T A T E Y K F R G L P
D G E N I L I B U S F T G I S
S C I E T C O P Y R I G H T E
S K C U D C N L I B D O M V N
U I Y K R O F L S P I L U T D
O T N I T A R O V A C A T I O
K X R A W C F J A H U N T J Y
Y L I M A S P H I P S E M

Basket
Bonnet
Bunny
Candy
Chicks
Chocolate
Daffodil
Decorate
Ducks
Dye
Easter
Egg hunt
Eggs
Family
Flowers
Grass
Happy
Jellybeans
Lily
Parade
Peeps
Rabbit
Spring
Sunday
Tradition
Tulips

The words can be placed in any direction (vertically, horizontally, diagonally or even backwards).

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## FIGHT THE CORONAVIRUS

CLEAN HANDS SAVE LIVES

## INFECTION

Even though we are in difficult times with the Coronavirus affecting us all in one way or another, management wishes staff, residents and family all the joy and wonder this special holiday brings.




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