

# CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS AND FAMILIES

Wednesday, 4 March 2020

As you may be aware there is public concern regarding the spread of the Novel Coronavirus across the world. We work in an environment amongst the frail aged who are among the people who would be susceptible to, and at risk from, infection from the virus. As providers of aged care, we have a responsibility to maintain our own health and well-being, and whilst at work, the health and well-being of our colleagues and our residents.

To ensure that we continue to minimise the risk to our residents in their home we will be implementing the following strategies which will need to be complied with. In the following scenarios you cannot visit the facility if you have:

- left, or transited through mainland China in the last 14 days (you must isolate yourself for 14 days from leaving mainland China).
- left, or transited through Iran on or after 1 March (you must isolate yourself until 14 days after leaving Iran).
- left, or transitioned through South Korea, or Italy, in the last 14 days (you must isolate yourself for 14 days from leaving either)
- been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus in the last 14 days (you must isolate yourself for 14 days after the date of last contact with the confirmed case).

Should you feel unwell or exhibit some of the symptoms associated potentially with either the corona virus or influenza please do not visit the facility until your symptoms have resolved. If you visit the facility when you are unwell you may put your family member, other residents and staff at risk from infection which could have a catastrophic outcome. We also ask that if you do become sick please receive a medical clearance from a doctor before you visit the facility.

We have developed, and implemented, infection prevention practices for staff and residents that we expect will mitigate the risk of transmission of infection. The success of these measures is also dependent upon each visitor playing their part to protect us all.

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## **Hand Sanitizer**

At every entry and exit door hand sanitizer will be made available for your use when you arrive and when you leave. There will also be multiple stations at every level in the facility including outside all lifts. There will be pump packs at all nurses' stations.

As per standard infection control practices you should use the sanitizer when you arrive, after touching hard surfaces and the last thing before leaving. You may also wash your hands at any of the wash basins located throughout the facility.

## **Meal Times**

In order to maintain your safety, and that of residents, we will be organizing a process for staff to assist with sanitizing residents' hands before eating. Some coronaviruses can potentially survive in the gastrointestinal tract however, food-borne spread is unlikely when food is properly cooked and prepared.

With good food preparation and good hand hygiene, it is highly unlikely that you, or residents, will become infected with coronavirus through food.

## **Activity Materials**

After resident activities the leisure and lifestyle staff will be sanitising the activity items that residents' and yourself may come in contact with. This will contribute to the cleanliness of equipment and will reduce the potential risk of transmission of the virus from one person to another. The leisure and lifestyle staff will also assist the residents to sanitise their hands prior to commencing the activities.

## **Cleaning**

When cleaning, staff will minimise the risk of being infected with coronavirus by wearing gloves and using alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves. We have organised for our contract cleaner to increase cleaning of some of the hard surfaces that we frequently come in contact with such as handrails, door handles and lift buttons etc. They will be treating these surfaces twice per week with a product that destroys virus upon contact. Please remember after you have touched these surfaces you should also use sanitizer or wash your hands.



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## Use of Masks

At the moment there is no clinical need for staff to wear masks whilst at work. We have no recorded cases of corona virus or influenza at the moment, so the risk for them, yourself and residents is quite low. We have sufficient stock of masks available and should staff want to wear one they have the right to do so. We have an obligation under Workplace Health and Safety to provide personal protective equipment for staff to use, should they so choose.

## Visiting Pets

At present there is no definitive evidence of the transmission of the virus from pets such as cats and dogs to humans, however there have been a couple of recently reports possible transmissions. They do suffer from species specific viruses but not the current corona virus.

Until further evidence is available it would be preferable if you did not bring a pet to visit the facility. It is also a good idea to wash your hands after contact with animals as it will protect you from transmission of other common bacteria such as E. Coli and Salmonella.

Together we can reduce the risk of the spread of corona virus amongst our residents and staff. To do so we need to follow the simple processes related in particular to hand hygiene.

If you have any questions regarding the information or strategies contained in this communication please do not hesitate to speak with staff in the facility.

Kind Regards,

Alasdair Croydon

**Chief Operating Officer**

