



1 April 2020

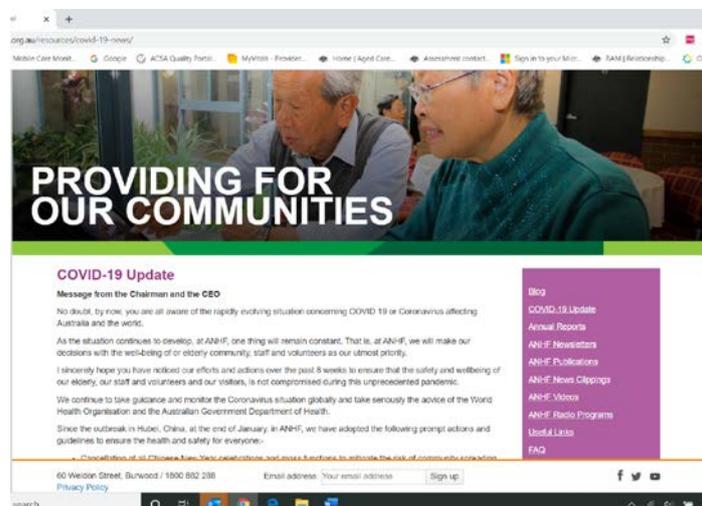
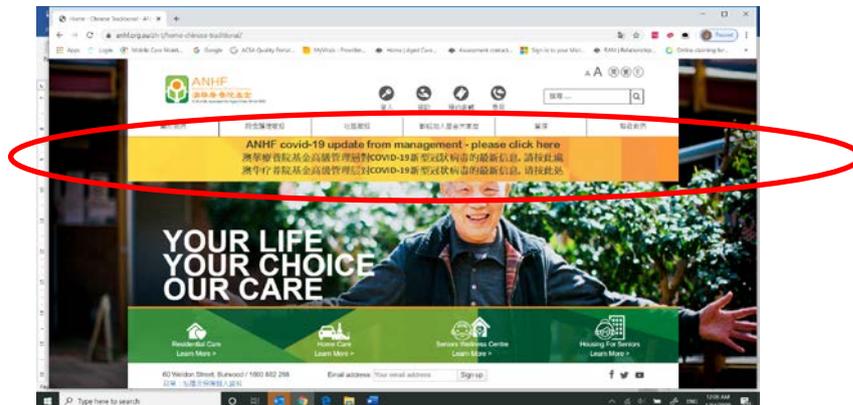
Dear Residents and Relatives,

COVID-19 Update #7

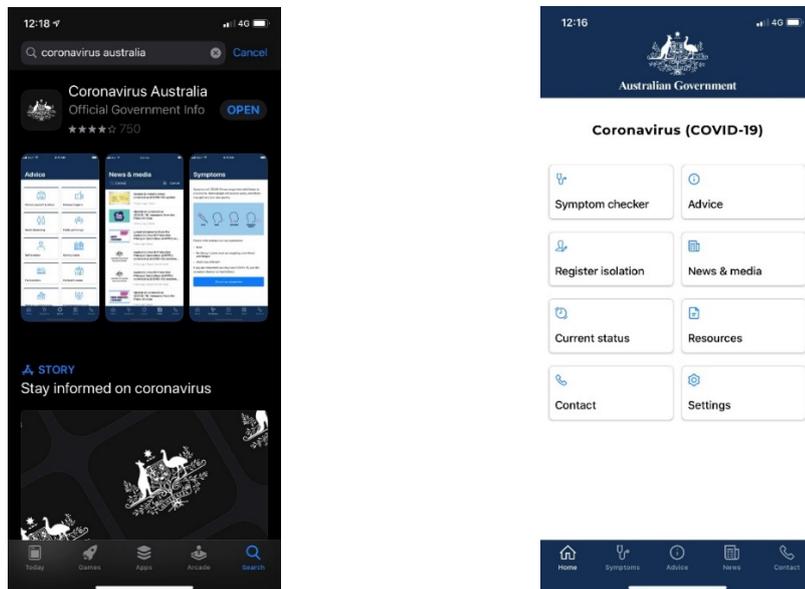
For the past two weeks, the words “unprecedented days” have repeated themselves many times. The impact of COVID-19 has touched almost every individual or family. The confirmed cases in NSW has risen five-folds over 2,000 cases in 10 days ago.

The Australian Prime Minister, NSW Premier and Chief Medical Officer have announced a number of measures in the past two weeks trying to combat the outbreak.

In order to help you to gain better understanding of our management action under COVID-19, we have developed a designated area on our website to provide you with updates. Please click into the COVID-19 banner on our website for our updates. (www.anhf.org.au)



Australian Government has also created the Coronavirus Australia App for those of you wish to be kept informed. You can download this App from your iPhone App Store or Android Google Play Store.



Among the new measures introduced by the Prime Minister since 16th March 2020, I would like to draw your attention to the followings:

1. **Staying Home** - On 29th March 2020, Prime Minister strongly advised that everyone from the high risk groups including all persons who are **70 years of age or above**, aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 50 years and vulnerable persons who have chronic conditions over 60 years and therefore low in immunity over 60 years of age, **NOT to go out** but stay home to self-isolate for the next few weeks.
2. **Mandatory requirement on Influenza vaccination** - Our Prime Minister also announced on 16th March 2020 that **all people** entering residential aged care facilities after 1st May 2020 **must** have received the 2020 influenza vaccination. Please refer to attached information sheet on 2020 Influenza vaccination.
3. **Visiting to our aged care facilities will be continuously restricted because of the potential devastating consequence of COVID-19 to our vulnerable residents:**

DO NOT VISIT

- if you are unwell (fever, sore throat, cough, muscle and joint pain, sneezing, tiredness/exhaustion);
- if any member of your household is unwell;
- if you had had any contact with someone who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19;
- if you or your household members have been overseas ANYWHERE in the past 14 days (you should have already been placed in isolation in this situation).

The legal guidelines on visiting are:

- Visits are limited to a short duration;
- Visits are limited to a maximum of two visitors per resident at a time. These may be immediate social supports (family members, close friends) or professional service or advocacy;
- Visits by children 16 years and under are not permitted except in special circumstances, as the children are generally unable to comply with hygiene measures. Exemptions can only be assessed on a case-by-case basis, for example, where the resident is in palliative care;
- Visits will be conducted in a resident's room, outdoors, or in a specific area designated by the facility, rather than communal areas where the risk of transmission to residents is greater;
- No large group visits or gatherings, including social activities or entertainment, will be permitted;
- No school groups of any size are allowed to visit.
- Visitors must be encouraged to practise social distancing where possible.

In order to comply with the government's directives as above, you must complete a "Request for Visit during COVID-19 form" and obtain permission from the Facility Manager before entering the facility. Please do not hesitate to discuss with our Facility Manager how best we could work together to achieve the best outcomes for everybody under the circumstances.

If you are allowed to enter the facility, please note that

- On every visit, you will be required to complete a Visitors Declaration During COVID-19 online form. You may complete the form at the entry point using our equipment or your own mobile phone by scanning the following QR code:



- You do not bring children 16 years and under with you;
- You will be required to observe the infection control guidelines and comply with the direction from the facility staff;
- On entry please wait for our staff to measure your temperature;
- You must avoid spreading illnesses:
 - Washing your hands well with liquid soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub before and after visiting, after coughing or sneezing, or before or after going to toilet will help reduce the spread of disease.
 - Cover your mouth with a tissue or your elbow (not your bare hand) when coughing or sneezing and dispose of used tissues immediately and wash your hands.

- Should it be your choice and decision to wear mask or other PPE when travelling from the community, please remove and dispose of the mask or PPE before entering the facility.
- Our staff will continue to facilitate distant communication for your loved one to connect with you via phone, video conferencing, FaceTime etc.

4. Social distancing measures – Our Prime Minister has announced in the past weeks that

- Every person should try to stay at home unless you are
 - Going to work or education (if you are unable to do so at home);
 - Shopping for essential supplies such as groceries, return home without delay;
 - Going out for personal exercise in the neighbourhood, on your own or with one other;
 - Attending medical appointments or compassionate visits;
- If you must travel, then you must travel at quiet times and keep 1.5 metres away from others;
- Whenever you are out of the home, always practice good physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- On 23rd March 2020, our Prime Minister announced that funerals must be limited to no more than 10 people. The 4 square metre rule and social distancing must be observed.
- On 29th March 2020 the National Cabinet agreed to further limit most indoor and outdoor non-essential gathering to 2 people.
- No more than 2 persons to travel together in a private car. The passenger must sit in the back of the car if s/he is from a different household from the driver. The passenger of the car must be from the same household before allowing to sit in the front seat next to the driver.
- You must avoid physical greetings at all times such as handshaking, hugs and kisses during your visit.
- Police are enforcing the new public safety measures in NSW. Any individual caught breaking social distancing or self isolation rules will cop on the spot fine \$1000 and/or up to 6 months imprisonment. Businesses will be fined for \$5000.

5. What to expect in the unfortunate event if the facility has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19?

- You will be contacted by the facility registered nurse in the first instance when your loved one starts showing flu-like symptoms.
- We will organise your loved one to be seen by his/her GP or the after hours doctor.
- Medical intervention or treatment may commence.
- Swab tests will be conducted for the resident to be tested for Influenza or COVID-19.
- During the 3-4 days while the test result is not known, the resident will be isolated and cared for in his/her room. Additional precautions including the use of PPE such as masks and gowns will be required to put on for anyone entering this room.

- Should the result be returned positive, the facility manager will make a decision if the affected room or wing or the entire facility will need to be completely closed down for visits.
- Department of Health has very clear guidelines for us regarding the use of masks and other PPEs in an outbreak only.
- The facility will not disclose the infection status of any residents except to the affected resident's authorised representatives.
- **Hospital Transfers or Nursing Home Care**
 - On 25th March 2020, **NSW Health has introduced a process called "Secondary Triage"**. All non-urgent flu and COVID-19 related calls from Residential Aged Care Facilities to NSW Ambulance will now be secondarily triaged by a remote accredited emergency physician consultation service. Please be aware that hospital transfer may not occur for all residents. It depends on the severity of the individual case and other factors. It will not be up to the family or Facility staff to decide.
 - If the remote emergency physician decides that the resident should be transferred to the hospital, s/he will book on the most appropriate mode of transfer for the RACF resident, including Patient Transport Service. Where needed and clinically appropriate, the resident will be transported by NSW Ambulance. In order to ensure that all the required documents are up to date for the remote emergency physician to make a decision, such as the residents' Advance Care Directive or Advance Care Plan, our staff may contact you over the next few weeks if they have questions.

We thank you again for your continuing understanding, patient and co-operation during this difficult enduring time. Please take care and keep well.

Yours sincerely



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