



ANHF

AUSTRALIAN NURSING HOME FOUNDATION

澳華療養院基金

Culturally Appropriate Aged Care Since 1980

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28 April 2020

Dear Residents and Relatives,

COVID-19 Update #8

Mandatory requirement on Influenza vaccination

With a few more days to 1st May, I would like to remind you about the new mandatory requirement announced by the Prime Minister on 16th March 2020 that **all people** (including visitors and staff) entering residential aged care facilities after 1st May 2020 **must** have received the 2020 influenza vaccination. To ensure that we are able to fulfil this requirement by the government, we will include this question in the declaration which all visitors have to complete from Friday 1st May. This means that we will deny access to anyone who cannot make the declaration and/or provide the proof on entry.

We understand that there are people who are not able to receive Influenza vaccination due to contraindications (e.g. allergy) or cultural or religious reasons. If so, we will require a written statement as evidence of support. It is the expectation of the Health Department for us to identify non-vaccinated visitors so that appropriate information can be given to them regarding additional precautions in the event of a respiratory infection outbreak.

In the absence of a vaccine for COVID-19, preventing exposure is still the single most important step that any of us can take to protect ourselves and others from contracting this virus.

In light of evidence that older people are more susceptible to contracting and being seriously affected by COVID-19, we deem that we need to continue our precautionary approach in responding to the pandemic. This approach includes continuous restricting visitors' access to residential aged care services, and also involve screening visitors and staff on entry to residential facilities.

We understand that it is important for you to maintain emotional connection with your loved ones, and in order to maintain the practicality in balancing the risk and benefit, we would like you to contact each Facility Manager first to work out 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.

Otherwise, visiting to our aged care facilities will be continuously restricted:

DO NOT VISIT

- if you or your close household members are unwell (fever, sore throat, cough, muscle and joint pain, sneezing, tiredness/exhaustion);
- 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.

When entering the facility, please note that

- you will be required to complete a "Visitors Declaration" every time before signing in to enter the facility.
- you will also be required to have your temperature checked to ensure that you have no fever.
- 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.

You will be regularly updated of your loved one's health and wellbeing by the facility staff and will be contacted by the registered nurse in the first instance if your loved one becomes unwell.

We trust that we are heading to the right direction as a community, and thank you again for your continuing understanding, patient and co-operation during this difficult enduring time.

For more updates regarding how we are doing during the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit our website www.anhf.org.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Chua', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jenny Chua
General Manager, Residential Care
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