



ANHF

AUSTRALIAN NURSING HOME FOUNDATION

澳華療養院基金

Culturally Appropriate Aged Care Since 1980

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Dear Residents and Relatives,

COVID-19 Update #15

I trust that this is a long-awaited news about the likelihood for our facilities to lessen current restrictions on visiting.

While the risk on community transmissions continues in certain areas in Sydney and Blue Mountains, the number of incidences has been declined in recent days. This certainly does help to provide an opportunity to review and revise our current visiting practices.

NSW Health has been closely monitoring the incidence of COVID-19 and has provided the following guidance to residential aged care facilities regarding visitor access:

1. Public Health (COVID-19 Aged Care Facilities) Order (No 3) 2020 was released on 16/09/2020 effective from 18/09/2020 to 17/12/2020. A copy of this order and its Chinese translation are attached.

2. Risk mitigation actions

- Three levels of action are to be employed, dependent upon the consideration or the risk exposure for any visitor as follows:-

Level A (Basic Public Health Measures):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Booking system will be used to manage the number of visitors on site to enable share use of suitable social distancing meeting places.▪ Our facility will obtain name and contact detail of visitors, including the time in and out of the facility (in case of contact tracing).▪ Symptom and travel history screenings will occur at entry.▪ A maximum of two visitors in a day, per resident, limited to relatives, close friends, at a time; children are to be closely supervised.▪ No limit to the duration of the visit per person per day.▪ Visits are restricted to identified and specific areas.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hand hygiene will be facilitated. Social distancing at all times: visitors (family, friends) to wear mask whenever outside of resident's room. ▪ Environmental cleaning post visit and at least twice daily cleaning of high touch surfaces.
<p>Level B (Managed access): All of the measures outlined in Level A, and:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visitors are escorted directly to the resident's own single room or specific visiting area (e.g. Transitional Room or Outdoor). The visit must remain within the room. ▪ There would be no movement into communal areas. ▪ At the completion of the visit, the visitor is to be escorted directly back to the reception area. ▪ Visitors will only be allowed to interact with the resident that they are visiting. ▪ Visitors and staff will wear mask at all times, with use of mask according to Clinical Excellence Commission guidelines.
<p>Level C (No access)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No visits permissible, with the exemption of health professionals. ▪

3. Visitor exclusions

- Circumstances where visitors would not be permit access to our facilities including:
 - when the visitor has been informed by NSW Health that they are a contact of a case (i.e. direct or indirect connected with COVID-19 outbreak venue/case);
 - the visitor has current symptoms / temperature (equal or over 37.5°C);
 - the facility has an outbreak;
 - when there has been evidence of ongoing community transmission in an area where the facility is located. Depending on the level of risk in the community NSW Health will advise the Residential Aged Care Facilities on measures to mitigate the risk according to the table above.
- In the event when visitors are not permitted access to our facilities, we will implement other methods to maintain the contact between residents and families. These methods include and not limited to glass door visit, courtyard visit, remote phone and video conferencing. These would be consistent with the Industry Code for Visiting Residential Aged Care Homes during COVID-19, which recognises a human rights approach to care that both protects and respects residents and their visitors. The Code can be found at <https://www.cota.org.au/policy/aged-care-reform/agedcarevisitors/>

4. Visitor's exposure to low or high risk event

- These visitors may or may not permit access the facility (Level A, B or C). This includes visitor who resides in or visited Local Government Area (LGA) of concern.
- The areas of increased risk events (where there are new or unexplained cases in the community, or cases in specific venues) are reviewed regularly by the Public Health Units and NSW Ministry of Health, with information placed on <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates>

5. Special Consideration by Request to the Facility Manager

- Compassionate visits: Our Facility Manager has discretion to allow for compassionate visits (for example, imminent end of life of a resident). If unsure, a risk assessment may be done in conjunction with the relevant public health unit. The involvement of clergy and other persons who play an important role at the time of resident's passing, would be facilitated in addressing the family's and residents' spiritual needs. Any visit that is permitted is subject to risk mitigation measures (Level B), keeping visitors to a minimum.
- Transition in our facility for new residents: New residents, whether arriving from home or from hospital, require care and support while settling into their new arrangements. Time limited visits (e.g. 1 hour) may be permitted on several days during the initial 14-day period, subject to the above assessments, and adoption of risk mitigation actions (Level B). This does NOT apply if the visitor is a confirmed case of close contact.
- Specialised carer: where the wellbeing of the resident requires a family member to provide primary support, this would be permitted, with adoption of risk mitigation actions (Level B). This does NOT apply if the visitor is a confirmed case of close contact.

About ANHF facilities

- **Currently we do not have any suspected or confirmed cases.**
- **From March till now, ANHF facilities have been implementing together the same restricted visit measures. However, with the decline of transmission in certain areas while there were increase in transmission risk in another area, different ANHF facilities' exposure to COVID-19 risk vary. In view of this, effective from Monday 28/09/2020, we like to ask you to check on the risk mitigation actions taken by each facility independently as they may be different from each other from now on.**
 - **With the COVID-19 outbreak still in progress at Concord Hospital where both Bernard Chan Nursing Home and Chow Cho Poon Nursing Home are located closely, it is unlikely to lessen restrictions to visit very soon.**
 - **Since Hurstville and Georges River Council did not get onto the COVID-19 hot spots, Lucy Chieng Aged Care Centre is able to lessen some visiting restrictions.**
- **Regardless, due to the environmental limitation at each facility for social distancing visit, all visits will be required to go through an appointment system once the request is assessed by the Facility Manager.**

- **What we have been doing that have not changed are as follows:**
 - Our Connection Ambassadors will continue to assist all residents to maintain communications with family, friends or others who are not allowed to enter the facility at this time.
 - Our registered nurses will continue to provide clinical updates of residents to their primary contacts.
 - Our Facility Managers will continue to consider all special requests for visits compassionately, in particular for the end-of-life situations or residents receiving palliative care. Please do not hesitate to contact our Facility Managers if you have any questions.
 - All staff and essential visitors are required to **wear a surgical mask** (provided by us) or other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while in the facility, in addition to the entry temperature check and screenings.

Thanks for your attention and understanding.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Chua
General Manager, Residential Care