

NEWSLETTER



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Advisors:

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As Omicron avalanches, what are the government's new strategies and our responsive measures?

Ms. Jenny Chua (General Manager ,Care Services)



1. The recent easing of the pandemic was shadowed by the new Omicron variant which sweeps globally. What are the new COVID-safe strategies and measures launched by the Australian government?

The Australian government does not seem to have any long term COVID-Safe strategies or measures in dealing with the new Omicron.

Both Federal and State governments have only made the situation worse by escalating the speed and impact of the crisis by relaxing the restrictions too soon, not to mention that all governments are not working on the same page in dealing with the Omicron crisis.

2. Do our residential care facilities allow visits by family members? Are our Seniors Wellness Centres still open? What are the COVIDsafe measures?

By mid-November 2021 we all looked forward to a relaxing of the visiting rules. As soon as a facility is not in outbreak mode or that we were satisfied that we could manage the risk, we supported in-home visits in dedicated areas provided that the visitors passed all screening requirements. However, with the recent scale of community infection and the serious impact each confirmed case caused to the facilities, we have just decided to cease all in-home visits or non-essential visits. Exemptions would be for essential care visits or end-of-life visit. Facility Managers will assess each request on a case by case basis. We will

continue to support residents to connect to their family by phone or by audio visual means; or our staff will continue to support 'window visit' or outdoor visit; or transport dropped off food or other items to the residents. We have also put some restrictions on residents going out (because this was the cause of our outbreak – a resident went out dinner with family and contracted from one of the confirmed cases there). This is unfortunate timing due to Chinese New Year. But we have to take the conservative approach to protect the more vulnerable.

All Seniors Wellness Centres have not opened yet. Our latest decision is to close all centres until early February. This is because of the very high community transmission risk that is affecting our consumers and staff. Many of the community venues where we hired for running our SWC have the same views and will not open for use until this wave of infection has subsided.

We have stepped up our screening process since mid-December e.g. supplying N95 face masks & face shields to ALL visitors to nursing homes; requiring ALL people entering nursing homes to take Rapid Antigen Tests. We need government support to carry out these costly measures continuously.

We ordered (with no government subsides) N95 face masks and reusable face shields for Home and Community Care workers and volunteers in December. Since then we have distributed the PPE to our care workers.

We have also been organising booster dose delivery to residents via the government's arrangement. We encourage staff to take up the booster dose by booking into many community immuniser or doctor's clinics. Reasons being that one needs to work out the correct interval between their second dose and the booster dose. It is also easier for staff to work out the booking that suits their personal circumstance. We saw the cons previously when all staff took the vaccine and asked for time off the following day at the same time. I can confidently testify that staff who took the booster have the least symptoms if they do get COVID-19.

3. The pandemic has been, in a global scale, affecting our lives for about two years. Many are predicting that the new normal will be living with the virus. Do management staff have any strategies or plans in response to the changes?

The new normal is still evolving. As I have mentioned that we had started to screen all people entering the nursing home with Rapid Antigen Test before Christmas, PPE use also stepped up in December as all staff inside the facility had to wear N95 face masks and face shields. However this cannot be a long term solution.

Staff furlough is a serious problem at the moment. Lately it is so easy to catch someone who could not pass a RAT. This is because many people exposed to the virus and became carriers may be asymptomatic and pass the RAT in the first 1-2 days. By the 3rd day when their RATs show a positive result, these people would have spent 2 days inside the nursing home or have contacted others. Not only that the nursing homes will lose again another staff to come to work but also have to commence lockdown and track all affected residents and staff will be tested again.

4. Will the direction of aged care services change in the future because of these changes?

Senior management has been closely following the industry peak bodies' advice. What we experienced is not only our problem. There were some recent changes in interim guidance over the shortening of isolation rules allowing asymptomatic confirmed or close contacts to return to aged care work sooner with additional risk management measures. However the responsibility becomes the onus of the provider. These rules are also changing all the time and reflecting differences in practices by different local health districts. We would like to see all governments work together as we do not feel their support and direction since the middle of last November.





Understanding RAT:

Edith Wong (Quality, Risk & Compliance officer)

Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) becomes a hot topic these days. Additionally, NSW Premier Mr Dominic Perrottet has announced mandatory register of positive RAT results. From 19th January, a penalty of \$1,000 will apply if you fail to register a positive RAT result.

What's RAT?

Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) is a type of test that is used to identify potential COVID-19 cases among people who are not displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 virus. It can be conducted at home to save the time of lining up in the testing clinic. The RAT result usually takes less than half an hour, whereas PCR test can take up to days to receive the result.

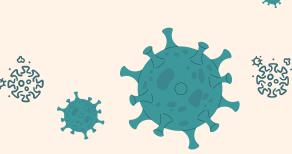
When do I need to do RAT?

- People with symptoms
- Household, social or workplace contact of a positive case
- Anyone before going to an event with lots of others, or before visiting vulnerable family members
- Anyone arriving from overseas (passengers and flight crew)

How should I choose a RAT kit?

Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has listed out the approved RAT in Australia since 1 November 2021. The website lists out the testing method of RAT (nasal swab or saliva), its clinical sensitivity and instruction guide individually. You can find out more on

https://www.tga.gov.au/covid-19-rapid-antigen-self-tests-are-approved-australia. In coming weeks, concession card holders (including pension concession card, Commonwealth seniors healthcare card and health care card etc) can access up to 10 free RAT kits over the period of three months (at a maximum of five kits in a single month) in pharmacies.





How to do a RAT myself?



RAT has different methods, including nasal swab, oral swab and saliva. Each test kit is for single used only. Please read the manufacturer's instructions for each test.

- 1) Check the expiry date of the RAT kit because expired kit would give you incorrect result.
- 2) Read the instructions before use because different brands of RAT kit have slightly different instructions.
- 3) Wash your hands before and after the test.
- 4) Clean the table and set up the testing kit (If you are testing more than one sample at the same time, always clean the table and wash your hands again between each test). Discard the RAT kit if the sealed package is damaged because it has been contaminated.
- 5) Wait for the result as per instructed time. Otherwise, the result would provide incorrect findings.
- 6) Discard all the used materials in a separate waste bag, that goes into the general waste.



Nasal swab

- 7) Blow your nose with a tissue.
- 8) Wash your hands.
- 9) Open the buffer tube.
- 10) Remove the swab.
- 11) Insert the fabric tip of swab into one nostril (around 2cm into the nose).
- 12) Rotate the swab inside the nostril at least 5 times.
- 13) Use the same swab to repeat Step 11 and 12 in another nostril.
- 14) Insert the fabric tip of swab into the buffer tube.
- 15) Swirl the swab in the liquid and squeeze the tube at least 5 times.
- 16) Squeeze the tube against the fabric tip to remove excess fluid from the swab. Remove the swab from the buffer tube.
- 17) Slowly add drops of the liquid into the sample well of the cassette.
- 7) Not to drink or eat 30 minutes prior to taking the sample.
- 8) Wash your hands.
- 9) Deeply cough 4-5 times with your mouth and nose covered with a tissue and keep a distance with others.
- 10) Take the saliva collector out of the base.
- 11) Place the collector on top, side or under the tongue for 2 minutes.
- 12) Take the collector from your mouth and push vertically into the base.



Oral swab



Saliva

- 7) Not to drink or eat 10 minutes prior to taking the sample.
- 8) Wash your hands.
- 9) Deeply cough 3-5 times with your mouth and nose covered with a tissue and keep a distance with others.
- 10) Spit the saliva into the test tube until reaching the scale line.
- 11) Add the buffer into the test tube.
- 12) Squeeze the tube 10-15 times.
- 13) Slowly add drops of the liquid into the sample well of the cassette.

What to do if I tested positive?

NSW Health has released a guideline of managing COVID-19 safety at home. Only certain people at high risk for health complication required a PCR swab for confirming positive RAT test, such as unvaccinated person over 16 years old or immunosuppressed. If you unfortunately test positive to COVID with chronic diseases, such as severe, chronic or complex medical conditions, diabetes. immunocompromised (including cancer), you should contact your GP or NSW Health COVID-19 Care at Home Support Line on 1800 960 933 (TIS service on 13 14 50) for medical advice. Isolate at home (separate in the room from other household members) for at least 7 days from the date you got tested. You should inform your household members, your family and your service provider about it.

You should also register the positive result on NSW Health website (https://apply.service.nsw.gov.au/register-positive-rapid-antigen-test-result/). You can alternatively call TIS on 13 14 50 and ask them to call 13 77 88 for register for whom require language support. With mild symptoms of COVID, it can be recovered at home after a few days by bed resting, keeping hydrated and taking some medicine for fever or sore throat (requires seeking medical advice). If you develop any severe symptoms (particularly severe dizziness, drowsy or confused, suffering shortness of breath, chest pressure or pain lasting more than 10 minutes, unable to stand etc), you should call Triple Zero (000) straight away and tell the ambulance staff that you have been confirmed with COVID-19.

Sources:

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When your relatives and friends have been confirmed with COVID-19...

The new COVID-19 virus strain Omicron has swept another global pandemic wave. The fast transmission rate brought tens of thousands of daily infected cases here in Australia. Probably we might have already heard that our friends or relatives had become confirmed cases. Fortunately the vaccination rate in Australian has reached more than 90%, many of those who have been infected have milder symptoms, recovery usually comes after several days by following the government's advice on self isolation and rest. Here in this issue you will read about the COVID-19 journey shared by two carers, one was a COVID-19 confirmed case, another had a family member who had been infected.

Elderly lady faced her husband's COVID-19 infection with positive mindset

87-year-old Mrs Lee is a carer. Before the pandemic, she always accompanied her husband who has dementia to So Wai Seniors Wellness Centre. As she aged, caring for her husband was increasingly difficult. After a fall in July last year her husband was wheelchair-bound upon discharge from the hospital. The doctor advised residential aged care for her husband since caring by Mrs Lee was beyond her ability. Since there was no vacancy in our nursing homes, Mr Lee entered another Chinese-specific nursing home. Mrs Lee could still visit her husband during the onset of the pandemic but as the situation worsened, visits were replaced by video calls.

In January the nursing home informed the family that unfortunately Mr Lee had been infected with COVID-19. With symptoms of fever and coughing, he had to be sent to the hospital. Mrs Lee said, 'Luckily with the two vaccination doses administered in the nursing home, his symptoms were mild. He became better gradually. Because of dementia, he kept on asking me over the phone why we were separated and where he was. I just casually told him that we sent him to the hospital because of his fall, he could return home after recovery!'

When asked whether she was worried about her husband's hospital stay due to COVID-10 infection, she said positively, 'Not a bit. I have confidence in the health system in Australia. The doctor-in-charge has been updating my daughter on my husband's progress. After staying in the hospital for ten days, he recovered and returned to the nursing home.' Though our lives have been interrupted by the pandemic, Mrs Lee harvests loving concern from many people. Ever since her husband had entered residential care,



she felt a bit lost and lonely when she woke up every day. 'That's life. You have to take up the "come what may" attitude. Staff at So Wai Seniors Wellness Centre always conduct exercise and news sessions for us through audiovisual means. With more contacts with others, life becomes much easier. They also assisted me to apply for the 24-hour safety pendant, which I still have it with me while taking a shower. If I fall, someone will come over to help.'

Mrs Lee has a big family with many grandchildren. Though they cannot see one another during the pandemic, chatting with her grandchildren over the phone every evening definitely is the best lullaby for a good sleep. Mrs Lee loves handicrafts, especially making bracelets with beads. Whenever she feels bored, she makes them. There is enough stock for an exhibition. When asked what she plans to do after the pandemic, she said, 'Of course dining out with family members! I'd also love to learn English.

I'll be very satisfied if I could greet the friendly Australians here in English!'

Carer Infected with COVID-19 at Test Clinic

Clara's father, who has a kidney problem, is our Home Care Package consumer. Despite the pandemic, our care staff continues to take him to the hospital twice a week for dialysis. Her father, like other traditional Chinese, loves yum cha but had to temporarily stop this habit when the pandemic peaked. Seeing that her father began to show signs of low spirits, Clara and her family members weighed the pros and cons against the risks before finally decided to follow father's will by arranging a care staff to accompany him to the Chinese restaurant again.

Clara said she always had headache. As she visited her father in alternate days, she went to a nearby test clinic for a PCR test just for safety measure. On the day when she walked into the test clinic, she felt intuitively that something was wrong. The chairs in the waiting area were not placed at a social distance of 1.5 m apart, the staff that carried out the test did not change gloves or perform any sanitization. Clara had her test before she could refuse. Soon after she left she began to feel so very uncomfortable that she had to immediately cancel a previously arranged appointment with her friend. The very first thing she did upon arriving home was to sleep. To her, she seemed to have slept 'unconsciously' for 24 hours. Apart from fever, her joints were in scalding pain. Her sense of taste was gone, nor could she eat anything. She could only keep on drinking water and forced herself to eat some biscuits. Clara told her family members that she might have been infected with COVID-19, they placed some food and a RAT kit outside her door.

Several days later the test result from the test clinic came: negative. Thinking that she probably have already been infected, she called the hospital and reported her symptoms. The hospital advised her to get there, where she had another PCR test, a blood test and a lung X-ray. After the consultation, the doctor told Clara that the worst was over and advised her to return home to rest and self-isolate. A QR code was given to her to follow up the test result, which turned out to be positive after a few days. She followed the government's advice to self-isolate for 7 days until all symptoms disappeared. She stepped out of the house only after having a negative test result from a RAT test.

To her, that was a narrow escape. Luckily her two previous vaccination doses had strengthened her to endure the symptoms. During her self-isolation, the person she missed most was her father, 'The doctor says he can live with dialysis for 4 years. Though he's in the 7th year now, his health has deteriorated recently. I treasure spending every minute and every second with him.'

'The doctor says he can only live with dialysis for 4 years.
Though he's in the 7th year now, his health has deteriorated recently.
I treasure spending every minute and every second with him.'

Rebranding — Spreading Our Wings to Soar High

As we step into 2022, ANHF has great news for the Chinese community. We have decided to change the Chinese organisation name that has been used for over 40 years to 澳華養老, literally meaning 'Aged Care for the Chinese in Australia' to help our consumers better understand our expansive range of aged care services. The new year 2022 dawns ANHF's flight to higher grounds!

Ada Cheng CEO

As times go by, the term 'Foundation' might mislead people in correlating it with financial organisations. After careful consideration, the Management and the Board decided to rename the organisation as 澳華養老 while 'Australian Nursing Home Foundation, ANHF' remains unchanged.

Established in 1980, ANHF is the first organisation to provide aged care services for the Chinese elderly. Our foundation mission was to ensure the elderly were properly cared for. The founders seven prominent personages with hearts as one even re-mortgaged their own houses to set up an initial fund to purchase our first nursing home. That was how ANHF got our organisation name. As our services first focused on nursing homes, Chow Cho Poon Nursing Home and Bernard Chan Nursing Home were founded in 1991 and 2001 respectively. Then it was Lucy Chieng Aged Care Centre (Hurstville) which was officially opened in 2011. With our new nursing home at Gordon scheduled to complete by the end of 2022, ANHF continues to operate the highest number of Chinese-specific nursing homes in Sydney.

'Proper care for the elderly' is not meant only for nursing homes. Seeing the needs of the Chinese elderly in community housing, ANHF has been striving for places where they can settle down for a home of their own. In 1985 NSW Department of Housing allocated 46 units at 528 Jones Street (Ultimo) as community housing to be managed by ANHF. To ease the increasing needs of the elderly in public housing, in 1988 the Department allocated again 24 units at 2 Poplar Street (Surry Hills) as independent living units. These two premises, together with Lucy Chieng Gardens which opened in 2001 as private elderly community housing, support the elderly in having their own cosy homes in senile years.

More than 20 years ago, ANHF has started

developing community services to meet the social and recreational needs of frail aged people, elderly people with chronic diseases and dementia and support in the form of day respite for carers. Seniors Wellness Centres were established to promote the wellbeing and focus on reablement of the elderly through centre activities, while supporting them to live independently in the community. After receiving NSW Government funding for our Ultimo Centre, we set up one Seniors Wellness Centre after the other. Currently we have 11 centres all over Sydney.

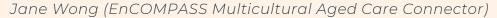
We also receive government funding to provide Commonwealth Home Support Program to meet the needs of the Chinese elderly for continuous support despite their choosing to stay at home. Apart from domestic cleaning, personal care and social support, our Home Care Services are also backed up by a well-established allied health team of registered nurses, physiotherapists, nutritionists, podiatrists etc to offer timely support in caring for the needs of the elderly to ensure the best care for their health.

ANHF can be said to be the first and the only aged care organisation that provides services solely for the elderly. We offer a wide range of aged care services that forms a solid foundation for one-stop service. With our services, every elderly in the ANHF family enjoys peace of mind.

The meaning of 澳華養老 not only lies in care services for the elderly but also in the assurance of accompanying the elderly, as they age, to explore ways of staying healthy and maintaining strength, to promote quality of life and to discover life's surprises and fun with a broadened mind. In other words, to relish and enjoy the grace, the beauty and the fulfilment of their golden years!

EnCOMPASS Connector -

helping you in your preferred language







As a newcomer, I am very excited and privileged to take on the role as Connector of the EnCOMPASS program.

This program was officially launched in mid-October 2021 for the elderly Chinese living in the Northern Sydney Region.

As this is a pilot program, one of my tasks is to promote and share it with community networks to quickly generate public awareness of the program.

Through face-to-face encounters with a number of elderly individuals, I found most of them are not aware of My Aged Care and their entitlements to receiving government subsidized aged care services regardless of their education, background and English proficiency. Even those who are aware of My Aged Care find it difficult to understand and unravel the complexity of the system and policy.

My experience gained in the last two months somehow reflected that most elderly people would seek help from others who can support them to act more independently rather than relying on their children to take care of their affairs. This demonstrates they value their independence, the importance of taking charge of their own lives and making informed decisions.

I am thrilled to join the ANHF family and am thankful for the opportunities that I have been given to cross path with the elderly. The more of such encounters and the more ability I have in assisting them means the more enjoyable my role is.

Your Support Takes Us Further 你的支持,讓我們的服務更進一步

You can also donate securely via our website: http://anhf.org.au/contact-us/donations

Thank you for your support. Below are the donations received from October to December 2021

謝謝各位的支持。以下為 2021年10月至12月期間之捐助人士芳名。

\$100以下/ <\$100	\$100-\$499	\$500-\$999	\$1000-\$4999	\$5000以上/ \$5000 and above
	Stella Ming Wai AU Rui Zhen TANG Anonymous	Xiaoyan XU P CHEN	Alexander Tsun Wah YUEN Dr Anselm KUOK	Sze-Yuan OOI Zita LEUNG Tao Guo CAI Shiu Kwan KWOK Ettason

Staff Movement

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2021



Name: Jane Siu Ling WONG

Position Title: EnCOMPASS Multicultural Aged Care Connector

From 18/10/2021, Ms Jane WONG has joined our Community Care team as an EnCOMPASS Aged Care Connector for Northern Sydney Region. Jane works 5 days a week from Monday to Friday. Her office is based at LCG, and working closely with CMU. Jane is able to speak English, Cantonese and Mandarin.



Name: Shan Sharon TAO

Position Title: DAPCSSI Care Advisor

Ms Sharon TAO commenced her DAPCSSI Care Advisor role (Nepean Region) from 24/11/2021. She works 2 days a week, and her office is based at LCG Room 11.



Name: Suk Ling Hazel WONG

Position Title: DAPCSSI Care Advisor

Ms Hazel Wong commenced her DAPCSSI Care Advisor role (Western Sydney Region and Southwest Sydney Region) from 26/11/2021. She works 4 days a week, and her office is based at LCG Room 14.



Celebrating 101st birthday of Mrs. Shui Wah LOWE





Mrs Lowe devoted her whole life in teaching and had nurtured countless students. After coming to Australia she established the first Chinese Language School in Chinatown and became the first headmistress there. She has a strong Christian faith, lives a life of reasoned discipline and is thankful for everything. She started attending Hurstville Seniors Wellness Centre six years ago, had many wonderful times with the elderly and the staff there and celebrated her 101 st birthday in an end-of-year party organised by staff. 'Mrs Lowe has been awarded as the Most Senior Elderly in ANHF Moon Festival Luncheon in the past several years. She'll always wear a beautiful Chinese "qi pao" to attend in elegance and grace.' Said Bridget, Hurstville Seniors Centre Coordinator. 'Mrs Lowe is an easy-going person with a positive and kind personality, a respectable role model among the elderly!' In the coming year her family members will help her move into a nursing home. May we wish her health, peace and joy!

Unforgettable Christmas and New Year during the Pandemic

LCACC 錢梁秀容療養院









LCACC 錢梁秀容療養院











BCNH 陳秉達療養院







CCPNH 周藻泮療養院







