

18 March 2020

Kirkbrae response to COVID-19

Kirkbrae continues to monitor the progression of COVID-19 to minimise the risks of infection for our residents, staff, volunteers and visitors. You will be aware that preventative responses throughout the community and from the government are being made to minimise contact with people as a form of self-isolation, and to encourage infection control activities such as hand washing and cough or sneeze practices.

We are particularly conscious that older people may be more vulnerable to becoming infected and that contracting this virus may have a major impact upon their health. Similarly, we know that our health care and support staff are essential to the ongoing care and support for our residents in aged care.

As of Thursday 19 March 2020, Kirkbrae will implement additional infection control precautionary measures to minimise the possibility of the transmission of COVID-19 to our residents and staff.

Aged Care

No Visitors will be permitted to enter the Kirkbrae residential aged care facility buildings (Acacia House, Banksia House, Jacaranda House and Waratah House – or any of their gardens, dining areas or other spaces) for at least 14 days.

We understand that there will be a few exceptions which will require visitors to come to the Kirkbrae aged care facility. This can only occur with the prior approval of a Care Supervisor or Facility Manager who will explain the conditions under which this can occur. Please contact them before coming to Kirkbrae by calling 9724 5200.

To minimise the transmission within the broader community Kirkbrae's use of volunteers, external entertainers, activities providers, visits by school groups will cease immediately. For our aged care residents, group activities will continue unless there is an outbreak, and no external trips will be held.

All prospective resident tours will cease, and admission of new residents will cease shortly.

If your loved one in aged care needs hospitalisation, they may be required to be isolated in their room upon return to Kirkbrae.

To provide ongoing contact with your loved ones in aged care, Kirkbrae has put in place iPads with Skype access so that your social contact with residents continues. If you wish to book a Skype session, please contact Lifestyle on 9724 5200.

Administration

Restricted access to the Administration building has been implemented to help protect the staff working there. During business hours please call Reception on 9724 5200 instead of coming to the building. Unscheduled visitors will be able to speak with Reception via an intercom system.

Where applicable, some staff will work from home to minimise their contact with other people. Other staff may need to take leave to care for children or other family members.

Retirement Village

Kirkbrae's group activities will cease on Thursday 19 March until further notice. Village residents are not allowed to enter the aged care buildings. No Kirkbrae activities will take place in the Community Hall and Community Hub buildings.

On a week by week basis, the Village Manager will assess the arrangements for using the bus for supermarket shopping. The time for the trip may alter to suit supermarket arrangements.

Reverend Matthew James has advised that the Sunday morning church service held in the Community Hall/Chapel will not be held on Sunday 22 March, or until further notice. He will advise members of the congregation separately. Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy will continue to be provided on a one-to-one basis.

The decision to restrict visitors and cease many activities has been made following considerable discussion by Kirkbrae management and with the advice provided by the Department of Health, the Australian Chief Medical Officer and health and aged care authorities. We understand the importance of maintaining social contact with friends and family and we will endeavour to assist with this whenever possible.

We regret the impact that these precautions have. However, our duty of care includes the responsibility to put in place prevention strategies to minimise the possibility of people contracting the COVID-19 virus at Kirkbrae or transmitting it to people at Kirkbrae when visiting.

Thank you to our staff who are continuing to provide care and support services for our residents during this difficult period.

I will provide further updates as Kirkbrae's response to the COVID-19 virus situation changes.



Mark Sketcher
Chief Executive Officer
Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes