



Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Factsheet for residential aged care services, residents and visitors

Who should read this?

This factsheet is for residential aged care facilities, residents and visitors.

Who can access or visit aged care services?

Access to residential aged care facilities has been restricted to essential services only to prevent introduction of coronavirus into the facility and transmission within the facility.

Family and loved ones can still visit aged care services. However, there will be restrictions.

All visitors entering a residential care facility will be required to undertake screening before entering the facility and must comply with infection control measures as directed by the residential aged care facility.

This will last until midnight on 13 April 2020 at this stage.

What does this mean?

Only essential services will be able to enter a residential aged care facility.

Essential services include:

- Regular staff of the service who provide clinical care, food services, administrative functions and cleaning.
- Other visiting clinical staff such as visiting medical officers such as general practitioners, geriatricians, palliative care physicians and other medical specialists, pharmacy services; specialist nurses; diagnostics services; and allied health services such as physiotherapists.

Residential aged care facilities will be reviewing all visits and reducing movement in and out of the facility.

This means clinical visits will be limited to essential assessments and management for resident's health conditions, including to assess and manage COVID-19 symptoms.

Other assessments and clinical activities may be postponed if it does not have adverse impacts on the health of the resident. Non-essential services, such as hairdressing, beauty treatments and some diversional activities will be cancelled.

Does this mean residents will not be able to have visitors?

No. Residents will be able to have visitors who provide essential care and support, but it will be restricted.

Residents will be able to receive visits for up to 2 hours per day with up to two visitors attending together, for the purposes of providing care and support to the resident.

Anyone under the age of 16 will not be able to visit, unless it is for end of life support.

Will family be able to be with someone to provide end of life support?

Yes. Family and loved ones will be able to provide support to a resident who is dying.

Restrictions on the number and age of visitors will not apply when support is being provided to a dying resident.

Residential aged care services will continue to talk to family members about a resident's condition and decisions about end of life care will be made in discussion with family members.

What if a visitor providing essential services feels unwell?

No visitor will be able to enter or remain on the premises of a residential aged care facility in Victoria if they meet one or more of the following conditions:

- during the 14 days immediately preceding the entry, the person arrived in Australia from a place outside Australia; or
- during the 14 days immediately preceding the entry, the person had known contact with a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19; or
- the person has a temperature higher than 37.5 degrees or symptoms of acute respiratory infection; or
- the person does not have an up to date vaccination against influenza, if such a vaccination is available to the person.

A person aged under 16 years, is not permitted to visit other than in circumstances where the person's presence at the premises is for the purposes of end of life support for a resident.

These conditions apply to all visitors regardless of age, including essential staff, visiting service providers – including people providing care and support and end of life support.

Residential aged care facilities will be undertaking screening of all visitors.

Other requirements for visiting

Essential visitors will need to:

- visit only the resident
- wear personal protective equipment as directed by staff
- enter and leave the facility directly without spending time in communal areas
- perform hand hygiene before entering and after leaving the resident's room.