

18 June 2020

Kirkbrae Update

The announcements by the Premier of Victoria about the relaxing of some restrictions on 21 June are a welcome sign of gradual success in the elimination of the COVID19 virus from most of our community. While these changes restart a number of community and social activities, there are no changes that relax the restrictions for the people whose health is vulnerable. The decisions affecting vulnerable people, such as the residents in aged care, are determined by the federal and state Departments of Health.

In the next few months Australians are usually affected by the flu virus and we need to adapt our lives to minimise being infected by the flu and to limit the transmitting of the virus to others. The precautions taken over recent months are similar to those that we should use throughout the flu season as well. Some of the infection control and restricted contact precautions are likely to remain in place until October for health and aged care services. A 'new normal' will be adopted as we find healthier ways to access health and aged care services, and to socialise and gather together with family and friends.

One precaution taken by Kirkbrae to minimise the possibility introducing COVID19 into aged care and affecting existing residents has been to temporarily cease admission of new residents. This, added to a number of other precautions, has kept our aged care home free of viral infections. Nationally, all aged care facilities are free of COVID19 and the risk of this virus being introduced by the admission of new residents is very low.

Kirkbrae's Clinical Governance Committee and senior clinical management have reconsidered this precaution and have decided that a gradual admission of new residents will commence in July. Initially this will be permanent residents who will undergo health screening and temporary isolation. Family members assisting with the admission will also be required to comply with current Visitor screening requirements.

In accordance with the national Visitor Code, visiting arrangements are:

- Visits to residents should only occur if they are essential to their wellbeing. For palliative residents, and other residents with special circumstances, visits will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- No children under 16 are permitted to visit unless there are special circumstances.
- A maximum of 2 people (including family, friends, GP, etc) visiting a resident per day, for a total of 2 hours
- All Visitors can only enter through Banksia House and must comply with COVID19 and influenza screening
- Bookings must be made 24 hours (minimum) prior to visit by calling 03 97245200

To the delight of many residents, the hairdresser will be returning to attend resident haircuts and trims in the next week. The service will be limited to resident rooms and will be scheduled as a visit to the resident. There will still be no perms or colours etc at this stage. Restrictions on this will be reviewed regularly so full service can return as soon as possible.

This Update has been sent to the primary person associated with the resident at Kirkbrae. Please pass these updates onto other family members, friends, and representatives so that they are aware of the current situation at Kirkbrae. The Update has also been posted to the Kirkbrae website. If you have any questions about the COVID19 or influenza situation at Kirkbrae, please call on 03 9724 5200 or send an email to Communications@Kirkbrae.org.au

Kirkbrae will continue to monitor Commonwealth Government health and aged care directives about COVID19 as well as the requirements of the Victorian state government. These government updates are received daily and we will continue to amend our practices to comply with them so that our return to 'normal' life at Kirkbrae happens carefully and safely.

Mark Sketcher
Chief Executive Officer