

COVID UPDATE

4 August 2020

The COVID-19 outbreak at Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes is a very significant and challenging event for everyone at our Aged Care Facility. We know that it has been, and continues to be, a distressing and traumatic time for residents and their families.

On Tuesday 28 July, 30 of our aged care residents were evacuated from Kirkbrae to St John of God Hospital in Berwick and they continue to be well cared for there. The families of all residents who were transferred were advised of the move and enquiries in relation to those residents should be directed to the Hospital.

Currently 43 of our residents remain in the Aged Care Facility at Kirkbrae. Eastern Health have taken over all operational aspects of our facility with Jane Jenkins as Interim Facility Manager. Residents are receiving good care, including pastoral care. We are making every effort to keep the families of our residents at Kirkbrae updated regularly on the health and well-being of their loved ones. We are endeavoring to contact the nominated family member for each of our residents at least once every day with an update.

Tragically 8 of our residents who contracted COVID-19 have died. We extend our deepest sympathies to their families and assure them of our ongoing prayers and support at this time of grief and loss. We still have 48 residents who are suffering from COVID (21 in St John of God Hospital, 26 in the Aged Care Facility at Kirkbrae and 1 in another Eastern Health Hospital).

We have had 35 of our staff test positive to COVID-19 and many are in 14 days of self-isolation due to contact with someone who had COVID-19. We appreciate their dedication and compassionate care for our residents and continue to pray for them and their families and seek to support them through this difficult time.

Thankfully all of our Village (independent living units) residents have remained safe from COVID-19.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) is the national regulator of aged care services. Their role is to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of older Australians receiving aged care. Since the very beginning of the outbreak at Kirkbrae, the Commission has been focused on monitoring and supporting our efforts to manage the outbreak and respond to the concerns of residents and their families.

This COVID-19 outbreak has caused us to experience ongoing challenges in implementing an effective response in a timely manner, and in overseeing and providing quality clinical care.

As a result on 29 July the ACQSC issued a Notice requiring us to take certain actions, including not to admit any new residents until the Commission is satisfied that the serious risk to care recipients has been effectively addressed. In compliance with this Notice we have appointed an eligible Nurse/Clinical Adviser (with the agreement of the Commission) and are implementing and complying with all advice, recommendations and directions of Eastern Health and other Victorian Health authorities. We are providing daily and weekly reports to the ACQSC on certain key issues.

We look forward to these actions enabling us to achieve an aged care facility which is free of all positive cases of COVID-19 and able to provide quality clinical care to all our residents.

Kind regards,

Grant Lawry
Convener
Social Services Committee