

10 January 2022

Dear Crowley Independent Living Residents & Families

Welcome to 2022. For many of us the year has not started as we had hoped with the pandemic still with us and the rise of the Omicron variant being keenly felt across Australia and throughout our local community. Of course we will continue to meet the challenges as they are presented by working together with you our IL residents and families.

Christmas and New Year was a wonderful time for many families as they got together after many months, and for some years, apart. Sadly it was also the perfect environment for Omicron to spread and we have seen that reflected in our community with new cases of over 100 each day being reported. We now have over 1000 active cases in the Ballina Shire.

As you may be aware, Crowley's Residential Care Facility is currently closed to visitors. Initially this decision was made on health advice in relation to the risk presented by the influx of travellers to our area and Christmas and New Year gatherings. This closure has now been extended with Crowley's residential care facility now being declared a low-risk outbreak by NSW Health, following three staff members who had worked recently having tested positive. The wonderful news is that none of the residential care residents are showing symptoms or have COVID-19.

Crowley have been planning and preparing for an outbreak throughout the pandemic and we have quickly enacted our Outbreak Management Plan, which includes actions for all of Crowley's services. A critical part of the plan includes us working alongside NSW Health to ensure we are up to date and can best advise and protect our residents, staff and wider Crowley community.

As many of you will be aware this current wave of Omicron has also affected a number of our IL residents, their families and friends, as either close contacts or positive cases. It has been sad to see these people unwell and we wish them a safe and speedy recovery. We thank them for keeping us updated. This ensures that the Crowley team and in particular the IL Team can provide critical advice and support as needed.

Naturally this new wave has had an impact on our IL activities and facilities. Plans that we were making at the end of 2021 to recommence or reopen have had to be changed. Activities that have recommenced have now had to be halted. Unfortunately the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for our IL residents is considered too great.

IL Activities

Including Bingo, Cards, Indoor Bowls, Men's Snooker, and the Men's Shed are cancelled. These will be reassessed as we see how the current community transmission risk develops.

Barney's in the Plaza

Is currently closed as a precaution. Resident's needing meal support can contact Crowley Customer Service to discuss support options available. Crowley Mobile Meal Service continues to be available for residents who can place a meal order the day prior by contacting Crowley Customer Service on 1300 139 099.

Library, Activity Centre and Gardenia Room

These areas will remain closed until further notice as indoor group gatherings should be avoided.

I would like to thank our Independent Living Residents for remaining vigilant throughout this time and continue to encourage you to be especially cautious in your movements and in your COVID safe practices. Without exception the health advice is to wear a mask whenever possible as it has a significant impact in reducing transmission.

Please do all you can to keep yourself safe and keep those around you safe. If you experience any symptoms immediately isolate and contact us. We will be able to provide you with the current advice on testing and provide support.

Once again we thank you for your understanding and support. Stay Safe.

Regards

Kelli Potts
**EXECUTIVE MANAGER
OPERATIONS & FINANCE**