

13 May 2020

Dear Home Care Clients, Families and Visitors,

From all our Home Care Team thank you for your support and partnership as we work together at this time of COVID-19 restrictions. It has certainly required some innovative solutions so that we continue to deliver the right Support Plans for your specific needs. Below is an important update on our Home Care services, with some new features that may make your life a little better at this unique time.

### **Flu vaccination 2020**

If you are over 70 years of age, having a flu vaccination this year is more important than ever. A flu vaccination helps to protect you from respiratory illness. We have been advised a number of clients have been vaccinated and have received their certificates. To keep everyone safe we are actively encouraging our Home Clients to be vaccinated against influenza, where their health permits them to do so. It is comforting to be able to inform you that our entire Home Care Team has been vaccinated against influenza. This was introduced due to COVID-19 and the high vulnerability of older persons in our community.

### **Wellness Calls**

Regular wellness calls have started for our Home Care clients as a part of their Home Care Package. The feedback has been tremendous with staff reporting these calls are a wonderful uplifting experience for everyone. The wellness calls are designed to ensure every client and their carer has the support they need, in whatever form that may take, at this very unusual time. Our Home Care staff are here to listen to you, have a chat and check that all is going to plan. If you are interested in receiving a wellness call, which is as often as you like, it's easy - give us a call on 1300 139 099.

### **Discharge from Hospital**

Crowley has a close working relationship with health professionals and hospitals across the region and this has continued during the pandemic. We continue to work closely with the Public Health Unit and Local Area Health networks to manage hospital care for our clients. We have an undertaking that all people discharged from hospital will have been screened prior to discharge. This is to ensure they are safe to return home and they will not be discharged should they display any of the identified symptoms for COVID-19.

We remind Crowley clients that it is important to continue to observe social distancing in your daily activities, and in particular after a hospital stay. Many clients have already been imposing their own self-isolation and this remains a good idea. We would recommend clients stay close to home for seven days post discharge in order to monitor their recovery and any symptoms that may develop. Crowley staff delivering direct care to these clients will wear PPE in line with our infection control protocols.

With community testing becoming more readily available, the NSW government is recommending that members of the community contact their GP for advice and testing should they display any symptoms or wish to be tested. It is important that we know if our clients are in hospital and we encourage families to contact our office if your loved one is in hospital, preferably before discharge.

## **Home Deliveries/Crowley Meal Service**

Crowley's unaccompanied shopping service has proven popular with clients at this time. If you have grocery or shopping needs, please jot them down on a list and your Home Care team member will do the shopping for you. In addition our Crowley Meal Service, providing meals delivered direct to your home, is currently being enjoyed by many clients. These meals are tasty and nutritious. To find out more and how you can access this service please call Crowley on 1300 139 099.

## **Service Times in the Home**

We have been required at this time to reduce service times in the home to one hour as a COVID-19 safety measure. If for any reason you feel you require more than one hour's support in your home, please contact our office to discuss scheduling additional services, such as domestic assistance. Due to COVID-19 our transport services are currently limited to essential medical services to keep everyone as safe as possible.

## **Keeping Connected**

It's wonderful seeing how Crowley as a community has supported each other and remained connected. Easter and ANZAC Day, whilst different this year, not only allowed us to reflect in very personal ways but to build on our wonderful sense of community. There is a sense of being together, despite being apart.

During this time of travel restrictions and the need for social distancing, we are supporting our Home Care clients with technology connections with their family and friends. We have a suite of measures in place for families and friends to stay connected with their loved ones. This includes your Home Care team setting up Skype sessions, FaceTime sessions, support with emails, placing phone calls and sharing photos and videos. If you wish to know more about chatting with family or friends via our technology support please speak to us and I'm sure we can help.

## **COVIDSafe App**

Crowley Care supports downloading and using the COVIDSafe App, where possible, because it better protects and keeps our home care clients and our community safe.

Thank you all once again for the way in which you are responding to this unprecedented community challenge.

Can I encourage you to keep reading the Department of Health Fact Sheets at <https://www.health.gov.au>

Kind regards



Michael Penhey  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**