

23 February 2022

Dear Residential Care residents, families and staff

Last week saw the NSW Government take a step toward easing of restrictions with the removal of density limits and Services NSW QR check-ins for the majority of businesses including aged care. In addition, from Friday this week, masks will only be mandated in certain community situations, although they will remain a mandatory requirement in aged care.

This is a positive step in the right direction and that feeling of positivity is definitely reflected in our community. It is with this same positive outlook we review the current health advice while recognising the impact lifting of restrictions will inevitably have on COVID-19 infection in our community. We are proceeding with both optimism and caution.

With this in mind effective **24 February 2022** residential care residents will now be able to leave the facility for **essential and general medical appointments**.

In taking this step we must all recognise the risk posed to our residents and others of residents leaving the facility to attend these appointments. To reduce this risk, we have put in place clear boundaries and guidelines in relation to the purpose and conduct of these appointments

Medical Appointments - the guidelines for essential and general medical excursions are:

1. Current health orders require residents to be Rapid Antigen tested on days 2, 4 and 7 after leaving the facility. This is an important consideration for families when determining the necessity for appointments.

As you are aware, for some residents this is not a welcome experience, particularly those with cognitive impairment however it is a requirement for all residents leaving the facility.

2. The resident is to be taken directly to the appointment and back to Crowley following the appointment with a pre-determined time period.

Social excursions to cafés, retail stores or the family home for example are not currently available. Whilst numbers are flattening we know there is still significant COVID-19 circulating in the community and vaccination does not stop you from acquiring COVID-19, only reduces the likelihood of a severe case.

The evidence is very clear that the majority of COVID-19 infections transmitted in the community continue to come from within family groups or between close social contacts.

Crowley's intention is always to act in the best interests of all residents by balancing the needs of individuals with the protection of the whole resident population in our care. This is a challenge that is not easy to navigate, but to date has been successful in keeping our residential care residents free from COVID-19.

Our focus from the beginning has been to maintain as much as possible the freedom of our residents onsite within the facility and outdoors. Keeping COVID-19 out of the facility ensures residents, who cannot be isolated or quarantined and cannot wear PPE, can continue to move about freely in the home without the risk of spreading infection to others.

We thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Penhey".

Michael Penhey
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER