

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

From the desk of the
**Chief of
Operations**



6 December 2024

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

Welcome to summer, which signals the beginning of the festive season, with resident parties having commenced this week. These functions are an important way to celebrate, bringing together residents and families, along with staff at the care home, and representatives from the Executive Team and Board. It is a great opportunity to not only celebrate, but the informal setting often leads to some constructive feedback from residents and families.

Welcome to Warrigal

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the 42 permanent residents who moved into Warrigal during October. There were also 53 residents that came in for respite, with many choosing to stay on permanently. Thank you for choosing to make Warrigal your home, and if you have any feedback on the journey into Warrigal please share it with myself or the local management team.

COVID Update

The number of COVID-19 outbreaks in residential care homes in Australia has increased throughout the month, increasing by 95 during November, with 237 current outbreaks. The number of outbreaks in NSW and ACT remained consistent with the previous month. I am pleased that we had no new COVID outbreaks during November at Warrigal, however today there were 2 residents that tested positive in one community at Goulburn. As we do every month, protocols are reviewed in line with community trends and there has been one change from the previous month, with residents now only being tested if they are symptomatic and not routinely tested each week.

Current protocols are summarised below;

- Residents will no longer to be tested with a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) on a weekly basis unless they are symptomatic.
- RATs are no longer required by staff, visitors or contractors however, there will still be RATs available at the entrance to all of our homes. These are optional, however anyone feeling symptomatic should complete one prior to entering the home.
- In the event of a COVID-19 outbreak, daily RATs will be required for anyone going into the care home. This is due to the increased risk that a visitor who has been in the home may be positive if they were in the home prior to the outbreak being detected, and this is considered a reasonable approach to minimise the possibility of transmission to other areas of the home.
- The Visitor Management System will continue for anyone entering a home. This system takes the temperature of any visitor, and also allows us to review any resident that has not had a visitor and may require emotional support.

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Aged Care Act

On November 25, 2024, the Australian Parliament passed the Aged Care Bill. The new Aged Care Act was a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. The Act will start on 1 July 2025 and will bring a number of improvements for older people, with a change from a focus on documentation with requirements for the provider to a more compassionate, person-centred system. Warrigal is committed to keeping our residents, customers and families informed as these significant changes unfold.

A Single Assessment System will replace all aged care assessments to shorter wait times and make it easier for people to navigate to receive support. The Regional Assessment Service (RAS), the Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) and the independent Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) will be replaced by the Single Assessment System. The first stage of its implementation has already started, with the introduction of the new Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) in July 2024.

There are changes with the fees being introduced, including a means-tested services contribution, and an exit fee will be charged, calculated at 2% of the RAD for up to 5 years. These changes will only apply to new residents from 1 July 2025.

Warrigal's Vision

I am pleased to let you know that the Board approved a new Vision for Warrigal, 'A world where older people feel known, loved and connected.'

Our vision provides an aspirational picture of the future we want to create for our residents, customers and families, and reflects Warrigal's core values of Integrity, Respect, Compassion and Innovation. It is pivotal in guiding our strategic decisions and shaping our culture. This vision has been the result of extensive collaboration between the Senior Leadership Team, key stakeholders and the Board over the past few months, and captures our aspirations for Warrigal's future, including the implementation of the new Aged Care Act.

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission continues to undertake 'Menu and Mealtime' reviews at a number of our homes, which continues to provide positive feedback and identify some areas for improvement. In addition to these reviews, the Commission conducted a full reaccreditation review at Mount Terry from 4-7 November 2024. I am pleased to advise that the assessment team found that all 42 requirements were met. The feedback from residents and families was overwhelmingly positive which was instrumental in success of the review.

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Planning for 2025

Over the past month, the Executive Team have been preparing their business plans for next year. It is always an exciting time looking at actions that support our strategic pillars, our values, and legislative changes, while delivering on our vision. Some of the planning for next year includes;

- A major lifestyle event being held twice a year involving participation from all care homes.
- Supporting a program for Nurse Practitioners to be trained in both regions.
- A recognition program for residents that achieve their physio goals in their care plans.
- Improving the results from the Quality of Life Indicators.
- Successful implementation of the new strengthened standards including relevant policies being updated.
- Consistent and improved communication at all care homes.
- An increased focus on quality, while still maintaining compliance and how this can be measured.

I sincerely wish to thank all residents and relatives for supporting Warrigal, and I wish you all a happy and safe festive season. I hope that I get the opportunity to meet with many of you at the functions being held throughout the month. As always if you have any feedback, please contact me by emailing warrigal@warrigal.com.au.

Yours Sincerely,

Craig Smith
Chief of Operations