

Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

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



3 January 2025

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

Happy New Year and welcome to 2025! I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful festive season surrounded by loved ones and are looking forward to the year ahead.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our residents and family members for the valuable feedback shared with me and other members of the Executive Team during the many wonderful events held throughout December. It was a pleasure to meet so many of you and seeing the community come together. A special thank you also goes to our incredible staff for their hard work in making the festivities so engaging and memorable.

As we step into 2025, the aged care sector is preparing for a year of exciting opportunities and transformative change. With the new Aged Care Act and strengthened care standards taking effect in July, providers like Warrigal will be embracing these changes to deliver even higher levels of person-centred care, quality, and safety for our residents.

New Strengthened Standards

Under the current aged care system, providers are assessed as either meeting or not meeting each of the 42 requirements reviewed by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. However, with the introduction of the new standards, providers will receive a graded evaluation for each Quality Standard, ranging from conformance, minor non-conformance or major non-conformance. An exceeding grade will also be introduced, though the specific criteria for achieving this level is still being finalised.

These changes reflect a stronger emphasis on meeting the needs of older Australians, focusing on person-centred care and upholding the rights and dignity of residents.

Standard 1 is about “The Person”, and underpins all the other standards, and is based around 4 key areas;

- Person-centred care.
- Dignity, respect and privacy.
- Choice, independence and quality of life.
- Transparency and agreements.

Given the importance of this standard, I will provide some details in relation to one of these areas each month.

This month's focus: Person-Centred Care

Person-centred care is a core approach that places each individual at the heart of their care experience. At Warrigal, this means that residents are treated as active participants in their care journey, which involves recognising their unique preferences, needs, and values and ensuring they are fully involved in care decisions.

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Here's what person-centred care looks like at Warrigal:

1. **Individualised Care:** Tailoring care plans to meet the specific needs, preferences, and aspirations of each resident.
2. **Respect and Dignity:** Ensuring that residents are treated with dignity, respect, and compassion, and that their rights are upheld.
3. **Informed Choice:** Empowering residents to make informed choices about their care, including decisions on treatment, lifestyle, and activities.
4. **Collaboration:** Encouraging collaborative communication between residents, families, and care teams to ensure that everyone's voice is heard in the care process.
5. **Holistic Care:** Addressing the physical, emotional, social, and psychological needs of the residents, promoting their overall well-being.
6. **Support for Independence:** Enabling residents to maintain and enhance their independence wherever possible, including decision-making and daily activities.

This new standard sets a strong foundation for the changes ahead, ensuring that every aspect of care is designed to enhance the quality of life for residents.

Welcome to Warrigal

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the 35 permanent residents who joined the Warrigal community during December. We also welcomed 49 respite residents, many of whom have chosen to make Warrigal their permanent home.

We hope your transition into your new home has been a warm and positive experience. Thank you for choosing Warrigal as your home, and we look forward to getting to know you better.

If you have any feedback about your journey into Warrigal, please don't hesitate to share it with me or your local management team. Your insights help us continue to improve and provide the best experience for everyone.

COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 continues to be monitored across residential care homes in Australia, with outbreaks decreasing by 15 throughout the month to a total of 222 active outbreaks Australia-wide.

At Warrigal, we began the festive season with no active cases, however an outbreak has since been identified at our Goulburn home, where 5 residents have tested positive.

As we do every month, protocols are reviewed in line with community trends and there are no changes from the previous month. Residents are tested only if they are symptomatic, with routine testing conducted only if there is an outbreak.

We remain vigilant and committed to the health and safety of our residents and staff. Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

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Laundry Services Update

During the festive season, a fire at one of our business partners' facilities caused a significant disruption to laundry services across several homes in the Illawarra region, as well as Bundanoon and Goulburn.

In response, we've increased resources in the laundries at the affected homes to manage the workload during this challenging time. Additionally, we've been in regular discussions with our external contractor, who has assured us that alternative arrangements for linen washing will be in place starting next week.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through this temporary issue and thank our teams for their hard work in ensuring residents' needs continue to be met.

Warrigal Central

As Warrigal continues to grow, we've recognised the need for a central location to bring our support services staff together. Currently spread across three sites - Albion Park Rail, Warilla, and Wollongong, these teams will soon call 'Warrigal Central' their new home.

Located on levels 2 and 3 at 10 Pioneer Drive, Oak Flats, Warrigal Central is a purpose-built office designed to strengthen collaboration and engagement among our teams. The move began in December with IT and Property Services staff, and will continue gradually, with all support teams expected to transition by the end of March.

This change also brings exciting opportunities for our existing spaces. Plans are underway to repurpose these locations, with the potential to accommodate home services and group social staff while providing space for allied health professionals. These upgrades will enhance the services and facilities available to our residents.

We're excited about this new chapter and look forward to the benefits it will bring to both our staff and residents alike.

I sincerely wish to thank all residents and relatives for your ongoing support of Warrigal. Your feedback and engagement are invaluable to us, and I wish you all the best for the year ahead. As always if you have any feedback or suggestions, please contact me by emailing warrigal@warrigal.com.au.

Consumer Advisory Body Expressions of Interest

Warrigal invites residents to join our Consumer Advisory Body (CAB) for 2025, where you can help shape the future of our services. Members will participate in quarterly meetings (both face-to-face and online) to provide valuable feedback on organisational trends and contribute to important discussions that inform our Board of Directors' decisions.

Meetings are held in both the Illawarra and Canberra regions, and while this is a voluntary position, participation in the CAB will help ensure Warrigal continues to deliver the highest quality care and services to our community.

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To submit an Expression of Interest for the Consumer Advisory Body, please visit:
<https://www.warrigal.com.au/cab/>

Yours Sincerely,
Craig Smith
Chief of Operations