

### Key points

- Exclusion recommendations are in place for certain areas in Sydney and Victoria
- Further advice will be reconsidered next week based on the incidence of COVID-19. In the meantime, facilities should monitor the COVID-19 news and updates page for any new locations of concern: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#latest-covid-19-case-locations-in-nsw>

Dear Residential Aged Care Facility Director

All residential aged care facilities must maintain vigilance to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 as community transmission of COVID-19 continues in some areas of the eastern states.

#### COVID-19 measures for residential aged care facilities

- **Minimise staff working across different aged care facilities.** Where ceasing staff movement across facilities is not practicable, additional measures should be put in place, such as maintaining records of staff and work locations and increasing use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Designate an infection control lead at your facility and ensure all staff are well trained
- Ensure sufficient stocks of **PPE** are held on site
- Ensure a **surgical mask is worn while in the facility** by **all staff** who work in, reside in, or have visited in the last 14 days, the NSW **areas** listed below or a NSW/VIC border community. This includes **when on breaks** and when undertaking **non-contact tasks** where physical distancing from others cannot be maintained.
- Ensure you have a robust process for **entry screening of all staff and visitors**

#### Access restrictions

- **Exclude all staff or visitors:**
  - with fever 37.5°C or higher, or respiratory symptoms<sup>1</sup>, even if mild
  - who have **been in Victoria** in the previous 14 days (exceptions exist for staff and visitors in NSW/VIC border communities with a valid COVID-19 border region resident permit)
  - who have visited any of the venues listed on the NSW Government website at the same time as a COVID-19 case (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#latest-covid-19-case-locations-in-nsw>)
- **Exclude visitors if:**
  - they have been in the following areas in the last 14 days:
    - **Lakemba (suburb), Liverpool LGA and Camden LGA**
  - the facility is located in these suburbs or LGAs.

#### Exceptional circumstances for allowing entry

- **Certain people who would otherwise be excluded from your facility may visit after a risk assessment is done.** These include:
  - those who visited the **areas** listed above yet have **compassionate** reasons (e.g., imminent end of life of a close relative or friend, or attendance by clergy) or who are providing an **essential caring visit**.

<sup>1</sup> Symptoms include: fever, cough, sore/scratchy throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, loss of taste or smell

- in **NSW/VIC border communities**, visitors who have not had exposure to areas of transmission in Victoria in the past 14 days at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/case-locations-and-outbreaks>
- Visits by these persons should only occur if they have **no fever or symptoms**
- A mask must be worn by the visitor at all times
- The visitor must go directly to and from the room and must be escorted by Facility staff when doing so.
- If unsure, a risk assessment may be done in conjunction with your local NSW Health Public Health Unit.

#### Guidelines for all visitor access

Visitor access to your facility must be in line with the requirements set out in the Public Health (COVID-19 Aged Care Facilities) Order (No 3) 2020:

[https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/file/Public%20Health%20\(COVID-19%20Aged%20Care%20Facilities\)%20Order%20\(No%203\)%202020.pdf](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/file/Public%20Health%20(COVID-19%20Aged%20Care%20Facilities)%20Order%20(No%203)%202020.pdf)

Facilities are asked to:

- Record **every** visitor's name and contact details
- **Ensure** children are closely supervised
- Ask visitors to undertake **hand hygiene** before and after entering the resident's room: [http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/601241/COVID-19-IPC-Guidance-for-Visiting-Patients-in-HCFs.pdf](http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/601241/COVID-19-IPC-Guidance-for-Visiting-Patients-in-HCFs.pdf)
- **Encourage visitors to remain within the room** for the duration of the visit. If the resident does not live in a single room, please use a designated outdoor area or alternative room where the resident and their visitors can keep apart from other residents.
- Allow no more than **two visitors** per resident at a time – this does not mean only the same two people can ever visit a resident.

Residential Aged Care facilities located outside of the areas listed above should be allowing residents to receive visitors. Allowing visits while maintaining appropriate screening and infection prevention measures will improve the health and wellbeing of your residents, as outlined in the Industry Code for Visiting Residential Aged Care Homes during COVID-19: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/industry-code-for-visiting-residential-aged-care-homes-during-covid-19>

Residents can leave the facility to attend small family gatherings.

If you need additional public health advice contact your local NSW Health public health unit on 1300 066 055.

Yours sincerely



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