

29 July 2021

Dear Resident, families, and visitors,

I would like to provide an update on the management of Covid-19 at Blue Haven and also let you know the latest visitor restrictions.

Update on management of Covid-19:

Blue Haven takes the threat of Covid-19 very seriously. The current outbreak in Sydney is a stark reminder of how transmissible this virus is. At Blue Haven we have been continuing to search for improved ways to prepare for the event of an outbreak. In the last few weeks, we have completed the following improvements:

- Review of our staff roster and improved continuity of staffing within each house
- Ordered and received new equipment that allows mobile PPE dispensing
- Reinforced our stock levels of PPE including masks, goggles, face shields and aprons
- Reviewed our outbreak management plan with support of the local health district infection control team
- Been in weekly contact with the local health district to discuss local issues
- Been in contact with local, state, and federal departments to clarify roles and responsibilities in the event of a localised outbreak

Blue Haven has a contingent of staff and necessary contractors that live in the Shellharbour or Wollongong LGA and are within the “lockdown zone”. We do not have any staff that travel from Sydney.

Staff that live in Shellharbour or Wollongong can travel to Kiama for work under the current orders. We take the steps of screening at entry and frequently communicating any locations of concern and testing if required.

You may have heard that mandatory aged care staff vaccination is coming in September. We have not yet seen any further detail from the Government about this although I have heard that a draft health order has been sent to Canberra for review.

Blue Haven is actively taking steps to prepare for mandatory vaccinations. Currently our staff Covid-19 vaccination rate is 65%. This is far higher than the general community rate of approximately 15%. This week I have worked with the Primary Health Network (PHN) to secure extra doses of Pfizer vaccine for our staff. Clinics to administer these vaccines will

commence August 10th on site at Blue Haven. I anticipate that we will be in the position of having a fully vaccinated workforce by September.

Visitor restrictions:

At the time of the most recent lockdown, we took a cautious approach of grouping ourselves in with Shellharbour requirements. Moving forward I believe that it is important to balance the risk of visiting residents at Blue Haven with the risks that come from social and family isolation. Given that the Greater Sydney lockdown has been extended we must take cautious and practical steps to ensure that a resident's quality of life is supported in balance with the risks of Covid-19 community transmission.

Commencing Friday 30th July Blue Haven will revert to visitor restrictions that apply to rural NSW. This means that:

- A resident can have a maximum of two visitors per day, in their room
- Visitors cannot visit if they are from Greater Sydney, including Shellharbour and Wollongong.
- Visitors must wear face masks. These will be supplied at reception
- Visiting hours will be 9am-4pm, 7 days a week
- Blue Haven staff will need to see proof of address (Drivers licence preferred) to allow entry.

Government advice also directs that visitors **must not enter an RACF** at all if they:

- Have been to any close, casual or monitor for symptoms locations in NSW in the last 14 days
- Live or have been to Greater Sydney in the last 14 days unless providing essential caring functions or end of life visits
- Have been to Victoria since 17 July 2021 and South Australia from 20 July 2021
Have been to any close and casual contact places of high concern in Victoria, Queensland or South Australia
- Have COVID-19 symptoms - fever (37. 5°C or higher) or symptoms of COVID-19
- Are a close contact of a person with confirmed COVID-19 and are within their isolation period
- Live in a household with a person who is currently isolating
- Are waiting for a COVID-19 test result

Residents leaving the facility for appointments:

I have received a few requests lately for residents to attend necessary medical appointments in Shellharbour or Wollongong. Under the public health order, it is allowed for a resident of Kiama to travel to these areas for necessary medical appointments.

In these cases, Blue Haven will do an individualized risk assessment and notify you of any precautions to take, or restrictions that will apply on the resident's return. This may include enhanced isolation precautions of Covid-19 testing. It is very important that we are informed of any planned trips to these areas and that we assist you to plan a safe journey. For assistance with planning a necessary medical appointment please call the assistant care manager prior to the appointment.

Finally, can I please thank you for your continued support of Blue Haven and its staff and residents and urge you to consider a Covid-19 vaccination for yourself if you haven't already done so.

If you wish to discuss any of the matters in this letter, or anything else please do not hesitate to contact myself or the assistant care managers on the numbers listed below.

- 1) **Rebecca Mullins.**
Ground Floor assistant care manager
Mobile phone: 0417 827 383

- 2) **Faye Sim.**
First Floor assistant care manager
Mobile phone: 0427 358 531

Sincerely,



Dale Wakefield

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