

11 July 2022

Dear Residents and Representatives,

Please find an update on the COVID-19 situation at Meath Care after PCR screening at both Centres yesterday.

Michael Lee Centre, Como

The PCR testing yesterday showed **3 new resident cases**: 2 on **Olive/Wattle**, and 1 on **Sheoak/Tyalla**.

Accordingly, red zones have been established in those areas affected, and precautions such as restricted visiting and increased dedicated staffing have been implemented, as well as enhanced COVID monitoring.

In addition to the PCR screening, we have undertaken screening to Tuart/Karri using RAT, as despite there not being any cases in this area, we are aware of recent potential exposure. Pleasingly, all residents in this area tested negative.

Clinipath will return to the Centre on 13 July (Wednesday) to rescreen residents in Olive/Wattle and Sheoak/Tyalla due to the confirmed cases in those areas. We will continue to use RAT for screening any residents who display symptoms or areas that may have been potentially exposed due to visitor or staff cases.

Dr Mary Surveyor Centre, Kingsley

The PCR testing yesterday showed **1 new resident case on Perry**. This newly identified case takes our current active caseload to 10 residents – 8 on Perry and 2 on Darch.

Clinipath will return to the Centre on 13 July (Wednesday) to rescreen residents on Perry and Darch.

Visiting restrictions

One of the repeated features of outbreak management has been visitor restrictions when we have confirmed resident cases. This is necessary to limit numbers of people from outside the Centre entering, as well as limiting the number of people from the community being potentially exposed by entering amber or red zones.

While it is always regrettable to limit visitors to our Centres, it is a guideline from WA Health (as set out in *Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Western Australian Residential Care Facilities*) and is fully endorsed by the Older Persons Advocacy Network (as seen in the current *Industry Code for Visiting in Aged Care Homes*).

As you may have observed in the last 5 months, a total visitor ban is a rare occurrence, and an action of last resort, as we recognise the potential harm that can cause. Consequently, we have taken the approach of balancing the infection control needs against the social and psychological welfare of residents. We have facilitated residents to remain connected using a controlled process allowing Essential Visitors, as well as through the Stay Connected programme.

RAT tests - visitors

On 8 July 2022, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (“**AHPPC**”) released an advice statement that reinfection from the new variants of COVID-19 can occur as early as 28 days following a previous infection. Following the AHPPC advice, we have now reduced the timeframe for visitors who have had COVID not being required to perform RAT before visiting from 6 weeks to **4 weeks**.

For example, if you tested positive for COVID-19 on 1 July 2022, once recovered (i.e. no symptoms and completed 7 days’ isolation) you would not need to RAT prior to entering a Centre until 29 July 2022.

We greatly appreciate your ongoing support and help at this time, especially as we have seen a small rise in community cases during the last week. Please keep safe and continue to take relevant precautions.

With best wishes,



Chris Roberts
Chief Executive Officer

General visiting hours

Monday-Friday: 0900-1600 hours

Saturday / Sunday / Public Holidays: 1000-1500 hours

Visiting outside these hours can be arranged – please discuss with the Centre Manager

Conditions of visiting, from 8 July 2022

Dr Mary Surveyor Centre, Kingsley

Darch and Perry

- This area is closed to Visitors (except Partners in Care / Essential Visitors); and
- Partners in Care and Essential Visitors will undertake **Rapid Antigen Testing** on entry.

Shenton

- All visitors must **wear a mask at all times** within the Centre;
- All visitors must be **fully vaccinated** against COVID-19 or have a valid exemption;
- All visitors must undertake **Rapid Antigen Testing** on entry;
- A **maximum of 2 visitors** at any time, and a **maximum of 2 visitors** per day;
- Visits must either occur in the **resident's room** or in **outside areas**;
- Visitors must practise social distancing, hand hygiene, and cough etiquette;
- Visitors must not visit if they are **unwell**, been in **contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case**, or visited a **potential COVID-19 exposure site**; and
- Visitors who have been **overseas in the preceding 7 days need to inform us of their overseas travel on entry**.

Michael Lee Centre, Como

Olive/Wattle and Sheoak/Tyalla

- This area is closed to Visitors (except Partners in Care / Essential Visitors); and
- Partners in Care and Essential Visitors will undertake **Rapid Antigen Testing** on entry.

Jarrah/Sandalwood and Tuart/Karri

- All visitors must **wear a mask at all times** within the Centre;
- All visitors must be **fully vaccinated** against COVID-19 or have a valid exemption;
- Visitors must declare that they have undertaken **Rapid Antigen Testing** in the **previous 4 hours** and have a **negative** result (NB - daily visitors - in the previous 72 hours);
- A **maximum of 2 visitors** at any time, and a **maximum of 2 visitors** per day;
- Visits must either occur in the **resident's room** or in **outside areas**;
- Visitors must practise social distancing, hand hygiene, and cough etiquette;
- Visitors must not visit if they are **unwell**, been in **contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case**, or visited a **potential COVID-19 exposure site**; and
- Visitors who have been **overseas in the preceding 7 days need to inform us of their overseas travel on entry**.