

**To:** Residents, Family-members and Friends

**From:** Jackie Barnes

**Issue Date:** 18 September, 2020.

**Re:** Aged Care COVID-19 Data Snapshot, Care Facilities Direction No.11, Returning from Hospital or Medical Appointments, World Alzheimer’s Day, Our Kitchen Team.

**Message:**

Dear Residents, Family-members and Friends,

Fluctuating infection rates in Victoria continue with 28 reported new yesterday, and 45 cases today. Across Australia there are 83 residential aged care facilities currently with active COVID-19 cases; 82 of these are in Victoria. Currently, there are no active cases at any Homestyle homes.

**1. RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE COVID-19 DATA SNAPSHOT**

On 12 September the Commonwealth Government released a [data snapshot](#) of residential aged care facilities which have recorded COVID-19 infections.

The data includes all aged care facilities where there has been more than one case in either a staff member or resident.

It shows that of the 2,706 aged care facilities in Australia, 213 - or 8% - have had cases of COVID-19.

The data does not include details on facilities that have had a single case - there are 98 of these facilities across the country.

National Snapshot	
Data as at 0800 on 11 September 2020	
Active outbreaks:	83
Active resident cases:	454
Active staff cases:	166
Deaths:	580
Total residential of outbreaks	213
Number of services resolved	130
Number of services with only one case of COVID-19	98
Total resident cases	1967
Resolved resident cases	925
Total staff cases	2082
Resolved staff cases	1916

**Residential Aged Care Deaths – All Causes**

Our thoughts are with all who have been impacted by COVID-19 especially those who have lost loved ones. Across the Australian Residential Aged Care sector this year to July 31 there has been approximately 1,000 fewer deaths of older Australians in care compared to the same period last year.

So whilst it is true COVID-19 has been the cause of many deaths in aged care nationally, increased influenza immunisation rates and infection control protocols introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic have been effective at containing the total number of deaths.

**Older Australian (OA) Deaths Due to Influenza**

Year	OA Deaths due to Influenza
2017	1064
2019	837
<b>2020</b>	<b>28</b>

### Aged Care International Comparison

By comparison to other countries, Australia's aged care sector, even with the situation in Victoria, has statistically managed the COVID-19 pandemic reasonably well.

Measure	Australia	UK	Canada
Overall COVID death rate as a proportion of cases	3.0%	12.8%	
Death rate in aged care as a proportion of total aged care residents	0.32% (3.2 in 1000)	5.3% (5.3 in 100)	
Aged Care Deaths	580	20,000	3,436 (6 May)
Aged Care Homes	2,672	9,081	5,801
Aged Care Homes with at least one confirmed case of COVID-19 in residents or staff	7.7% (213)	56% (5,085)	21% (1,231)

### 2. VISITOR STATUS: CARE FACILITIES DIRECTION No. 11

As the COVID-19 restriction levels in Victoria are presently in state of change, we want to remind all family-members that they must as a minimum wear a surgical mask if they are permitted to visit a resident inside a home. At some homes, visitors will also be provided with other items of PPE (e.g. face shields, gloves, gowns,) and instructed in their correct use. Visitors must comply with their home's PPE directions if they wish to enter the home.

*Care Facilities Direction No.11* came into effect on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September. There was very little change and family-members still require the permission of the DON/Nurse In-charge in order to make a face-to-face visit with a resident. We recommend that you contact your home before visiting as visitors status can change quickly and there may have additional requirements, conditions or restrictions for entry.

The new direction specifically excludes the entry of any person to an aged care home who has:

- In the past tested positive for COVID-19 and is yet to receive clearance from the Public Health Unit (PHU)
- In the last 14 days been a contact of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, or
- Been tested for COVID-19 and is yet to receive their results.

### 3. RESIDENTS RETURNING FROM HOSPITAL OR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

In order to keep the residents in our care safe, Homestyle has followed the recommendation of the Victorian DHHS and requires that all admission/readmission of residents from a stay as a patient in hospital complete 14 days in their room, including an 11th day COVID-19 test.

Under these circumstances, residents will receive all care and meals in their rooms, and nursing staff will perform wellbeing checks and ensure resident's remain active and engaged while in their rooms.

The following requirements apply to residents that leave the home for less than 6 hours to attend an **ongoing regular medical appointment** (e.g. for dialysis or chemotherapy) or to attend a **one-off specialist medical appointment**:

- a) Residents will be provided with a surgical mask when they leave the home, and a second mask if they will be more than 4 hours outside the home.
- b) Residents, and any accompanying family-member will be asked to follow COVID-19 hand-hygiene and physical distancing rules whilst outside the home.
- c) When returning to the home, residents will be required to complete COVID-19 health screening and daily health checks by nursing staff.
  - o If any symptoms are present the resident will be COVID-19 tested.
- d) Based upon the potential for exposure to COVID-19 during an out-of-home appointment, and any symptoms, the DON will decide upon the period of time that a resident must remain in their room and how many time a day health checks are performed. Typically for a one-off appointment, the time in their room will be 7 days.
- e) Note: if attending ongoing regular medical appointments it is reasonable to expect that the medical provider will administer a once weekly COVID-19 test.

**4. WORLD ALZHEIMER’S DAY**

Next Monday, 21 September, is **World Alzheimer’s Day**, aimed at raising awareness and challenging the common stigma that surrounds Alzheimer related dementia. Alzheimer’s is a progressive disease that impairs memory and other mental functions. You can support this cause by wearing purple on Monday. For more information see Dementia Australia’s – [Dementia Action Week](#) promotions

**5. PHOTOS – OUR KITCHEN TEAM AT WORK**

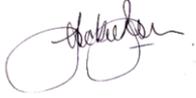


*Here are some of the faces of our wonderful kitchen teams who deliver thousands of meals each day. (Note: Photos taken prior to the Stage 4 introduction of masks)*

*For the latest COVID-19 advice, information and resources, go to [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) or the Coronavirus hotline 1800 675 398 (24 hours).*

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the home of the writer.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jackie Barnes".

Jackie Barnes

COVID-19 Response Manager

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