

17 September 2020

Dear Residents & Families

### **COVID-19 Update – #33**

The practices and measures that have been introduced to keep our facility free from COVID-19 have become the new 'normal' and continue to be effective. We are cautiously optimistic to see numbers steadily decreasing in our community and across Melbourne.

#### ***Proactive COVID-19 testing***

On Tuesday this week, Aspen Medical attended Park Lane to facilitate a Department of Health initiated voluntary COVID testing exercise. A total of 61 residents and 63 staff participated in what turned out to be a very positive experience all round. As expected, test results were COVID-19 negative for all participants. The Aspen staff were professional, caring and very gentle in conducting the tests, and were most impressed with their experience at Park Lane.

#### ***ACQSC resource***

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission has created a resource which sets out the changes that will come into effect in an aged care facility in the event of a COVID outbreak, titled 'What to expect during a COVID-19 outbreak – residents in aged care homes'. As indicated by the title, this document is primarily aimed at keeping residents informed, but will no doubt be of interest to families as well. A copy is attached for your information.

#### ***Victorian Aged Care Response Centre (VACRC)***

The Victorian Aged Care Response Centre will be publishing a new weekly COVID-19 data snapshot for Victoria. This report will provide a high level overview of the situation in aged care for COVID-19 in Victoria. It will also include statistics about specific outbreak sites for those facilities which have had more than 1 positive case. This will include a breakdown of resident and staff positive cases (including current active cases), as well as deaths. This report will provide greater transparency for residents and their families around the current situation in aged care facilities.

While we have been keeping families updated and will continue to do so should we have an outbreak, we wish to advise you that the data will be made publicly available. If you are interested you can follow the link below.

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/09/covid-19-outbreaks-in-australian-residential-aged-care-facilities-covid-19-outbreaks-in-australian-residential-aged-care-facilities-11-september-2020.pdf>

#### ***Keep in touch***

Please continue to make use of email 'KeepingInTouch@parklaneagedcare.com.au' to communicate with or share any stories, photos or short media clips with your loved ones and to book Skype or Facetime calls.

Should you require further information or wish to discuss any of the above, please contact Jody James, Clinical Services Manager or Dianne Sambuco, General Manager.

Kind regards

The COVID-19 Prevention & Outbreak Management Team





# What to expect during a COVID-19 outbreak – residents in aged care homes

If someone has COVID-19 in your residential aged care service, a number of changes will take place. These changes are necessary to help reduce the risk of you contracting COVID-19.

When an outbreak occurs, the following changes will happen quickly.



## LOCKDOWN

Visitors will be restricted



## INCREASED COMMUNICATIONS

Everyone will be kept informed



## TESTING

All staff and consumers will be tested



## ISOLATION

You will be asked to remain in your room



## PPE

People will wear gowns, gloves and masks



## INCREASED CLEANING

All areas and surfaces

These changes will probably be unsettling and may make you worried, but they will help protect you and others.

You can help by remembering to wash your hands often with soap or sanitiser, keeping at least 1.5m away from other people and reporting any symptoms of illness immediately.





# What to expect during a COVID-19 outbreak – residents in aged care homes

If someone has COVID-19 in your residential aged care service, a number of changes will take place. These changes will be made very quickly. You might be anxious when these changes take place but the aim is to keep you safe.

The changes you may notice include:

## LOCKDOWN

- Visitors will be asked to leave and a lockdown will commence
- You will not be able to leave the building except in special circumstances

## INCREASED COMMUNICATIONS

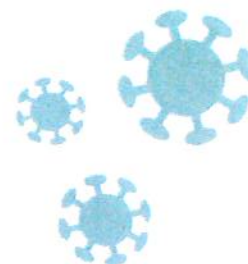
- Staff will keep you informed about what's happening, and if you have questions, you should ask them
- Your family will be contacted and regular communications about the outbreak will be provided
- You will be assisted to communicate with your family and friends
- Signs will be placed outside the room of anyone who has tested positive to COVID-19
- Signs may also divide the building into different zones
- Other signs will confirm that the home is in lockdown and responding to a COVID-19 outbreak

## TESTING

- All staff and residents may be tested for the virus
- Tests may need to be repeated as the outbreak is managed or if you start to have symptoms

## ISOLATION

- You may be kept completely away from other residents to help protect everyone in the home
- You may be moved temporarily to a different room or location as the staff try to reduce risks to all residents
- You may be asked to use a different bathroom or to wash in your room



## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- People will wear special equipment to manage the risk of COVID-19 spreading throughout your home – this may include a gown, gloves, mask and face shield. This is to protect you and others from the spread of the virus
- If you are coughing or have tested positive for COVID-19, you may also be asked to wear a mask
- People in masks look different and it can seem frightening. They will tell you who they are, and you will get used to seeing people like this. They will continue to care for you



## INCREASED CLEANING

- Common surfaces will be cleaned more regularly – this includes bedrails, light switches and handrails
- Your room will be cleaned often, while other areas will be cleaned multiple times each day



## OTHER CHANGES

- Food may be prepared in a different place and may appear different. You will be served food in your own room
- Trays, cutlery and crockery may be replaced with disposable items
- There will be increased monitoring of your health and well-being – this may include regularly checking your temperature, breathing and looking for other changes in your condition and how you feel
- Different or new staff may temporarily assist with your care and support services – this is because the usual staff may be isolating at home. This may involve more individual care for you if you have particular needs



## HOW CAN YOU HELP

- Be understanding that the changes are designed to protect residents and staff. They will likely be temporary
- Ask questions if you are worried about anything
- Remember to wash your hands with soap often and thoroughly; avoid touching your face and mouth; use your elbow or a tissue to cover your cough or sneeze
- Report any symptoms of illness immediately