

COVID-19 Update #4



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Dear Residents, Families and Friends,

Thank you all for your consideration of the temporary pause on visiting arrangements. We received survey responses from 49 residents and 17 families in total, and I know many more have discussed the matter with management or staff. Out of 66 surveys returned, 62 (94%) were in support of the precautions introduced. We understand this doesn't mean it's easy for any of you, but that you are concerned for the health and wellbeing of your families and friends.

In response to questions, suggestions and concerns raised, I would like to emphasise that:

- We will make special arrangements for families where a resident is receiving end of life care. Please speak to the care manager or facility manager if you are concerned
- We have put extra staff on to assist with social and emotional support of residents including small group, 1:1 support and facilitation of video conferencing or telephone calls with family. We will continue these arrangements over the Easter public holidays.
- We have considered whether we can allow families to visit residents from outside the building. The risk assessment doesn't make it possible at this time, but we are continuing to explore options.

Electronic Communication Update

I am pleased to report that a number of families have taken advantage of the video calling facilities we have put in place. So far the applications that are working best include:

- FaceTime – suitable for iPhones or iPad devices
- WHATSAPP video call – suitable for Android Samsung
- Zoom – suitable for a laptop (but not everyone has the bandwidth)

We have staff available to assist with calls during the previously advertised visiting hours:

Monday – Friday	11.30am – 1.30am 5.00pm – 7.00pm
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Saturday – Sunday	11.00am – 3.00pm
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If you would like to assistance, please contact reception on 4349 2301 to discuss the best option for you.

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Progress with Social Support Initiatives

Pen Pals – what a lovely old tradition!

Many families are exchanging letters, cards and flowers instead of visiting.

We have also commenced a young pen pal program for residents who expressed interest. So far, we have signed up 8 children from the community, who have sent in beautiful drawings and letters. This has a two-way benefit for all participants and the results have been delightful. Below are a couple of examples showing the joy these exchanges can bring.



Pets



We have reviewed our pet policy in relation to disease transmission and invited one staff member to bring in their dog so far. Angus was an instant friend to many.

Gardening

A new garden bed has been installed in the special care unit to encourage residents to enjoy time outside. Planting and tending vegetables and herbs can stimulate many senses – sight, smell, touch, taste – which is therapeutic.



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We remain free from any diagnosed cases of COVID-19 and thank you for your assistance in protecting the health and wellbeing of residents, staff and visitors.

With the Easter Long Weekend upon us, we encourage you to heed the instructions from our government to stay home. The collective actions of our community seem to be making a difference and we hope our precautions will contribute to a faster return to normality.

Please don't hesitate to send through feedback or suggestions through our email address: info@evergreenlifecare.org.au, by return email to this communication, by mail or by phone.

Stay well and best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen Wilson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Helen Wilson