

Monday 2 August 2021

Dear Family Members and Carers,

Thank you for doing your best for the community and your loved ones by staying home and following the Public Health Orders in your state and region. We know the lockdown is causing significant disruption, isolation and frustration for many of you.

Despite the current situation, the care staff in our homes continue delivering exceptional care. I am proud of their dedication and perseverance under very testing circumstances. Many staff are going to significant lengths to ensure they can still come to work and keep the residents safe, including surveillance testing every 72 hours.

We understand the closure of homes is heartbreaking as you can't visit your loved ones in person. Please know our care staff share in your distress and look forward to seeing families come back to the home. We understand how important it is for you and your loved ones to spend time together.

In Local Government Areas where lockdowns persist, we look forward to having you back as soon as possible. Please know that we are making plans to allow for family and carer visits as soon as case numbers decrease and restrictions ease.

Some of you have applied for exceptional visits to see your loved ones. Unfortunately, the majority of these requests have been rejected as they do not meet the current visitation criteria. We know this is incredibly distressing for you, and we appreciate the patience and understanding many have shown. However, I am saddened that in some instances our staff have been subject to verbal abuse and threats of unauthorised access to the homes, potentially placing our staff and your loved ones at risk of contracting COVID-19.

Please know, our primary concern when reviewing exceptional visits is to keep residents and staff safe from COVID-19 and to remain compliant with the State Government Health Orders. Any abuse or threats directed towards staff creates unnecessary pressure on an already demanding situation, risking the mental health and physical wellbeing of our staff.

I ask you all to please treat the staff with respect, kindness and grace during these difficult times. Despite the frustrating situation, everyone deserves to be treated with consideration and courtesy.



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In that spirit, I encourage you to get behind our aged care workers by showing your appreciation and support by saying 'thanks for caring'. This Saturday, 7 August, is Aged Care Workers Day and an opportunity for us all to express our gratitude and thanks to our incredible team of care workers.

You are welcome to send a message to a care staff member or home by emailing [SupportTheStaff@baptistcare.org.au](mailto:SupportTheStaff@baptistcare.org.au) Messages of thanks and appreciation will be shared with our BaptistCare teams.

Kind regards,

**Allan Waters**

General Manager – Residential Services and Retirement Living