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Dear Inala Resident Families and Carers,

We trust you are well and healthy and thank you for your messages of support and encouragement during these challenging times. Thank you also for respecting the protocols we have established in relation to visiting Inala.

### **What has changed since we last communicated?**

You are probably aware the Government announced further restrictions on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2020 with indoor and outdoor gatherings now limited to two people. Exceptions to this requirement include members of the same household – which includes Inala homes and their residents and supporting staff.

The government is also advising all people stay home unless you need to go out for essentials such as exercise, shopping, medical appointments and necessary work and school. People over 70 years of age, as well as those over 65 with chronic medical conditions are advised to stay at home as much as possible. It has been highlighted by the Government that these restrictions are expected to be maintained for 90 days, until the end of June.

### **What's new?**

Due to the mandated and needed restrictions on social contact, we moved to the next stage of our response and management plan this week in order to minimise risk to clients and staff and ensure everyone's wellbeing.

### **Changes to 'Home' life**

Regular social activities, shopping ventures, medical appointments and allied health visits have changed to help keep everyone safe. Accommodation staff have been implementing alternate activities including lots of exercise and involvement in 'home life'. We are working on technology so everyone can stay in touch with family and friends and we have purchased extra leisure items and games for use within the home. Accommodation staff members are completing the shopping alone to avoid residents having unnecessary contact in supermarkets and shops.

Among the Accommodation Management and Health Care Team we have established a daily 'welfare check-in' for clients and staff in each of our 14 homes. The aim of this 'check-in' is to maintain regular contact, catch up and have a chat and to keep engaged with everyone on a regular basis as we have limited our face to face contact. We will move to FaceTime catch ups very soon. We sincerely appreciate the efforts made so far by everyone to keep everyone safe, active and engaged.

### **Home visits by allied health professionals**

With the restrictions in place, unfortunately we can no longer support non-urgent therapists visiting homes. If you have any appointments of this nature you feel are urgent or necessary, can you please email Kerry or Rebecca directly to discuss.

So that we can continue to minimise the risk of infection for clients and staff, all therapy visits will need to be authorised and unfortunately therapists who arrive without this approval will be asked to leave by staff.

The Health Care Team continue to support all necessary medical appointments for residents. Some of these are in person and some consultations are done over the phone or FaceTime to further ensure everyone's health and safety.

### **'Redesigned' service delivery**

From Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March, all Inala residents have been supported in or from their home environments for Day services and Work. They have been supported by familiar day service staff, with transition assistance from Accommodation Staff.

We are incredibly grateful for the staff for their co-operation and flexibility during this transition. Many of them are working in less familiar environments, most particularly the staff from Miroma who travelled from the Eastern Suburbs, they continued to provide daily supports and activities as part of the Day program to Inala residents without missing a beat. Their ability to adapt to deliver 'redesigned' Day services has been a wonderful example of the teamwork and commitment that makes Inala such a strong community.

The week has progressed well, and many of our residents have embraced the changes, while understandably some have been more anxious with the disruption to routines. The familiarity of day staff has helped ease these concerns. Staff and clients are being encouraged to come up with creative and new ideas to add to the programs in this new environment.

We have continued to provide interesting and stimulating activities, art and craft programs and music, exercise and outdoor programs consistent with mandated guidelines. These have been developed with client consultation to ensure individual personal interests are taken into consideration to maintain routines, skills and meaningful enjoyment as much as possible during these changed times.

### **Social distancing and limits on people gathering**

In response to these further restrictions and the ongoing need to practice social distancing, we have developed 'social distancing' protocols, with tips to guide clients and staff – these have been distributed throughout services and offices.

We are all practicing these protocols where possible and recognise that it is not always practical for staff and clients to be 'socially distant'.

Inala residents and staff are able to get out and exercise and go for walks, and it will be important to maintain this as part of our daily routine where possible. In order to respect the new restrictions we are limiting the number of people in a group to no more than three, that is, 2 clients and one support staff. If 2 such groups are walking, the groups should keep substantial distance from each other so as to remain separate

In line with these guidelines, we are also limiting contact between residents in different houses. We all appreciate these are challenging times and we continue to investigate and find creative ways for the community to remain connected.

### **Implications for visiting Inala**

Family visits will still be able to occur at Inala homes.

Please be aware that visitors are now restricted to a maximum of **two people**, who are **both from the same household**. If you do visit, please follow the protocols in place in relation to hand washing and social distancing.

So that we can ensure both social distancing and opportunity for visits, we ask that all **visitors make arrangements directly with** Rose, Kerry and Rebecca (ideally via email) so that we are able to track all visitors in our houses. We are keeping a central log of planned visits so we can avoid double ups and more than one family visiting at the same time. It would be appreciated if we could have 3-4 days notice of all planned visits.

Email details for Rose, Kerry and Rebecca are:

Rose Field [rfield@inala.org.au](mailto:rfield@inala.org.au)

Kerry Ballard [kballard@inala.org.au](mailto:kballard@inala.org.au)

Rebecca van Bilsen [rvanbilsen@inala.org.au](mailto:rvanbilsen@inala.org.au)

We also ask that you do not visit if you have any symptoms of cough, cold, sneezing etc. If you are showing any signs of cough, cold, sneezing on arrival or during your visit, the staff members will need to ask you to leave.

If we all follow these guidelines, we can work together to help ensure you and your loved ones remain well and healthy.

### **Thank you for your support and understanding**

We believe these changes are appropriate and necessary measures to continue to minimise the risk for all Inala clients and staff and to help ensure their safety and well-being, as well as continue to provide a high level and quality of support through suitable activities and programs.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact us, in the first instance via your relevant service Manager. All questions are reviewed and discussed by the Executive management team in our daily Planning and Response meetings.

Please be assured that we continue daily monitoring of all services, client and staff status, as well as the latest Department of Health, local area Health, NDIA and Government updates in developing each step of a considered staged management response planning.

*We will continue to do our utmost that each person connected with Inala continues to be supported as fully and safely as possible.*

### ***We thank you sincerely for your continued trust and support***

Please remember the need to be vigilant in your social distancing practice, as this is vital to stop the spread of coronavirus. We remind all members of the Inala community to continue to practice good hygiene to protect against infections and reduce the spread of Coronavirus.

The most significant daily preventative measures required are:

- ✓ Regular and frequent washing of hands with **soap and water**
- ✓ Practice social distancing and do not gather in groups of more than two people (excluding members of the same household)
- ✓ Avoid touching surfaces, especially in public places and then touching any area of the face

For your convenience, below is a summary of the so-called “Reasonable Excuses” to be outside in NSW during this period:

1. Obtaining food or other goods or services for the personal needs of the household or other household purposes (including for pets) and for vulnerable persons
2. Travelling for the purposes of work if the person cannot work from the person's place of residence
3. Travelling for the purposes of attending childcare (including picking up or dropping another person at childcare)
4. Travelling for the purposes of facilitating attendance at a school or other educational institution if the person attending the school or institution cannot learn from the person's place of residence
5. Exercising
6. Obtaining medical care or supplies or health supplies or fulfilling carer's responsibilities
7. Attending a wedding or a funeral
8. Moving to a new place of residence (including a business moving to new premises) or between different places of residence of the person or inspecting a potential new place of residence
9. Providing care or assistance (including personal care) to a vulnerable person or providing emergency assistance
10. Donating blood
11. Undertaking any legal obligations
12. Accessing public services (whether provided by Government, a private provider or a non-Government organisation), including social services, employment services, domestic violence services, mental health services, and services provided to victims (including as victims of crime)
13. For children who do not live in the same household as their parents or siblings or one of their parents or siblings — continuing existing arrangements for access to, and contact between, parents and children or siblings
14. For a person who is a priest, minister of religion or member of a religious order going to the person's place of worship or providing pastoral care to another person
15. Avoiding injury or illness or to escape a risk of harm
16. For emergencies or compassionate reasons.

We wish to reassure everyone that our positive pro-active planning is in place to ensure the wellbeing and peace of mind for all our Inala community.

We will keep you updated as the situation evolves through frequent communication. If you have any questions, please direct them in the first instance to supervisors and coordinators.

Once again, our sincere thanks for your cooperation, support and patience during this unprecedented time.

Kind regards,



Martin Porteous  
Joint Chief Executive Officer



Rebecca van Bilsen  
Joint Chief Executive Officer