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 Established 1958

14<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Inala families and carers,

We hope you are healthy and well.

Since our last communication, we are very pleased to report the small number of staff who had been in contact with Tangara staff or students have all returned negative COVID-19 test results.

Following a number of positive cases of COVID-19 in Cherrybrook and the surrounding area (including a cluster of cases at Tangara School for Girls, NSW Health included Hornsby Shire and the Hills District in their list of identified LGAs and suburbs.

NSW Health sends updates to residential and home care providers with advice and guidance for people who reside in the following LGAs and suburbs:

LGAs	Suburbs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hornsby</b></li> <li>• <b>Hills District</b></li> <li>• Camden</li> <li>• Campbelltown</li> <li>• Canterbury-Bankstown (Bankstown part)</li> <li>• Liverpool</li> <li>• Newcastle</li> <li>• Parramatta</li> <li>• Waverley</li> <li>• Woollahra</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merrylands</li> <li>• Fairfield</li> <li>• Guildford</li> <li>• Sydney</li> <li>• Surry Hills</li> <li>• Darlinghurst</li> <li>• Woolloomooloo</li> <li>• Potts Point</li> <li>• Rushcutters Bay</li> <li>• Elizabeth Bay</li> <li>• Centennial Park</li> </ul>

The guidelines from NSW Health for residential and home care providers focus on:

- Limiting staff movement across services
- Ensuring staff awareness of infection control procedures and use of PPE
- Robust processes for screening staff on arrival at work
- Limiting visitors to the facility

Following this information on Monday, we (the Inala executive) have continued to monitor the situation, with particular attention to the increase in positive COVID-19 cases in areas close to Inala, including Cherrybrook and Castle Hill.

**What is Inala doing to minimise risk to clients and staff?**

Inala is committed to minimising the risk and taking precautions to help ensure members of the Inala community remain healthy and well.

In line with this approach, ***we see the necessity for re-design of our service operations*** in order to continue supports in the safest manner possible, and to minimise the risk associated with the number of people coming into contact with one another as well as congregating in the same space.

**Inala is implementing the following changes effective from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020:**

- **All Inala Accommodation clients**, unless otherwise advised, will not attend their usual Day or Employment services. Similar to the situation in late March, residents will be supported in or from their Inala home environments for Day supports, and Day service staff familiar with clients will be re-deployed for this support along with existing familiar Accommodation staff members.
- **Day services operations** - as above, Inala residents will be supported by Day service staff to participate in Day supports in and from their residence. Inala 'Day-only' clients (living with families or non-Inala group homes) will continue to be supported in the naturally greatly risk-reduced Day Service environments. A reduced number of clients in Day services means we can continue to practice social separation and allow static groups each day with dedicated staff to minimise the contact points between people.  
Our design of supports and preventative measures have been checked with and confirmed by NSW Health as good and safe practice.
- Clients and staff are familiar with this scenario from earlier in the year and we are confident this experience and the familiarity of support staff will help with any adjustments
- Wherever appropriate and/or assessed as needed, Individual risk assessments will be conducted and appropriate measures put in place to continue to provide or re-design supports as much as practicable.
- Please be assured we have stringent protocols in place to help ensure the safety and wellbeing of your loved one and please don't hesitate to contact your service manager directly if you have any concerns or questions.
- We continue to monitor daily developments and have made necessary changes to strengthen our guidelines, to limit interaction with and accesses to the wider community, venues and activities. We will however continue to visit open spaces such as parks for necessary time outside and exercise.

**Additional measures we are implementing:**

- All non-essential visitors will be postponed and unable to visit Inala until further notice.
- Administration staff will minimise their time in the office and move to a roster to work from home where this is possible.
- Move to online shopping throughout the organisation to limit interaction with shopping centres in the LGA.
- Reinforce requests for staff to remain vigilant and minimise local community interactions in their own time.
- Accommodation Management and Health Care Team are limiting direct client contact and contact with each other to minimise risk

**Ongoing protocols remain in place:**

- As all Inala services are located in designated areas (Hornsby, Hills Shire and Woollahra LGAs), **all Inala staff are provided with and will wear a surgical mask at work.**
- We continue to maintain concerted vigilance with all aspects of enhanced cleaning, hygiene, social distancing, temperature checks and daily symptom monitoring.
- All staff and clients with a temperature greater than 37.5 degrees Celsius or respiratory systems (including fever, cough, sore/scratchy throat, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell) will be excluded from work or day programs. They will be advised to isolate at home and seek COVID-19 testing. All staff and clients attending Day services are temperature checked and monitored for any symptoms on arrival and daily.

We also wish to advise all families, that due to these circumstances we will again suspend the \$10 per day Day Service materials and transport fee charge.

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.

We understand this is a major decision and results in a level of disruption to everyone's lives. We trust that you appreciate the need for Inala to take this step as part of our risk minimisation and management plan and are grateful for your support.

**Next steps**

Please, be assured that we continue daily monitoring of all services, client and staff status, as well as the latest updates from NSW Health. We will provide updates as we receive additional information or directives from NSW Health, particularly as they review the identified LGAs based on positive COVID-19 cases.

NSW Health have indicated they will review the LGA list at the end of August. We anticipate we will be in this situation for at least two weeks and possibly longer.

*We will continue to do our utmost that each person connected with Inala continues to be supported as fully and safely as possible and we implement measures to help ensure each person's physical and mental wellbeing.*

**How can you help?**

Please continue to be vigilant and practice social distancing, good hygiene and limit your community interactions in identified LGAs and suburbs. (These are listed at the end of this letter for your reference).

Also follow Government guidelines on wearing masks in areas where you cannot socially distance, particularly in indoor areas.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us, in the first instance via your Service Manager.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding during this challenging time.

Kind regards,



Martin Porteous  
Joint Chief Executive Officer



Rebecca van Bilsen  
Joint Chief Executive Office