



Head Office  
Cnr Castle Hill & Franklin Rds  
PO Box 122  
Cherrybrook NSW 2126  
T: (02) 9680 1000  
F: (02) 9899 4058  
E: reception@inala.org.au

ABN: 22 000 434 364  
Patron: Blanche d'Alpuget  
www.inala.org.au  
Established 1958

13<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Inala residential families and carers,

We trust you are healthy and well and thank you for your continued messages of support and encouragement during these challenging times.

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 and we are happy to assure you that all Inala related clients and staff are well and COVID free.

### **Update on NSW Health information and current status**

As you are aware from our last communication, 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.**

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:**

- **All Inala Accommodation clients** will not attend day services, effective from **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020**. 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.

- Inala residents 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 a smooth transition to this new mode of delivering day supports.
- Spending time outdoors and exercising when the weather allows will be an important part of daily activities for residents. Each house, as a group, will also be able to spend some time in a designated room in a Day service (eg Dulkara) to participate in a particular activity on a pre-scheduled day. This will be pre-arranged to limit interaction between non house mates. We believe these initiatives are an important part of managing each individual's mental and physical health and well-being.
- Urgent Medical and dental appointments will proceed with one to one support.
- **Day services** - Inala Day clients living with families or other 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.
- 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.
- We continue to monitor daily developments and have made necessary changes to strengthen our guidelines, to limit interaction with and accesses to wider community, venues and activities.

#### **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.**
- As all Inala homes are located in a designated LGA, unfortunately there will be **no visitors allowed to Inala homes** until further notice.

- 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 to 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.

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 Officer

Advice and guidance from NSW Health for people who live in or have visited the following LGAs or 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> |

Red = new addition