

Friday, 2nd October 2020

Dear Residents, Families and Friends,

COVID-19 and Royal Commission Updates

I am writing in regards to recent changes to the WA Health Department directions for visiting residential aged care homes and the Royal Commission Report special report into Aged Care and COVID-19¹ released yesterday.

There were some minor amendments made to WA's 'Visitors to residential aged care facilities directions'², version 3 has been revoked and version 4 has now been released.

Although changes are minimal, the definitions of symptoms have been expanded and are detailed below.

Anyone visiting an Aged Care Facility, must satisfy the following:

- are well;
- no signs/symptoms of infection such as sore throat, cough, running nose, shortness of breath, fever or chills and **now also include no loss of smell or taste;**
- have not travelled internationally/interstate in the previous 14 days;
- have not had contact with anyone at risk of, or confirmed as having COVID-19;
- are vigilantly practicing social distancing, hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette; and
- have received and can provide written evidence of their 2020 influenza vaccination.

In conjunction with our qualified in-house infection control staff, we have reviewed our policies to ensure that we are able to keep everyone safe and comply with our legal obligations. It is essential that all visitors to The Richardson comply with our policies.

As all visitors must be screened by a staff member in regards to their health status and body temperature, our visiting times must be adhered to.

Our visiting hours now include some later finish times to accommodate different individual circumstances; these will be effective from next Tuesday (6th October 2020).

Visiting Hours:

- 08:30am until 4:30pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- 09:30am until 6:00pm Tuesday and Thursday
- 09:00am until 3:30pm weekends and Public Holidays

We ask you to please observe these times; visiting outside of these hours places an additional burden on our nurses who are caring for our residents. Please do not be offended if you are refused entry due to our nurses being focused/engaged with resident care. It stands that we are able to make allowances to visiting times only under extenuating circumstances, such as end of life. Please see one of our managers to discuss.

The recent Royal Commission report and the Governments focus on improving our sector for the benefit of residents, families and staff is welcomed by the team here at The Richardson. It is refreshing to see a recommendation for all homes to have a qualified infection control staff member in-house. We also welcome the national advisory body to provide assistance to providers in the event of an outbreak.

We are incredibly fortunate to be located in WA where our families and friends have enjoyed relatively unrestricted visiting of their loved ones.

We ask again, that you observe our visiting hours and adhere to our policies so that we can do our best to keep everyone safe.

Kind regards



Michelle De Ronchi
CEO, Oryx Communities

1. <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/aged-care-and-covid-19-a-special-report.pdf>
2. <https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Visitors-to-Residential-Aged-Care-Facilities-Directions-No-4.pdf>