



IMPORTANT: COVID-19 Update – **Positive case identified at Calvary Cessnock Retirement Community**

Date: 20 October 2021
To: All Staff - Calvary Cessnock Retirement Community
From: Martin Bowles, National CEO | Bryan McLoughlin, Regional CEO – NSW

We are writing to inform you that a fully vaccinated member of staff has tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19) at Calvary Cessnock Retirement Community. The staff member worked in the Kalingo and Neath Lodges while infectious.

We understand this is a difficult time for you, the residents you care for and their families. We also understand that people will be anxious, and I want to assure you that we have planned for this scenario and will continue to do everything possible to cater for your and residents' health and wellness needs safely during this difficult time.

What are we doing to contain the outbreak?

The facility's **COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plan (OMP)** is in place for such a scenario. Accordingly, we have taken **immediate action** to contain transmission and keep residents and employees safe, including:

- Physically isolated the affected person, including any close contacts;
- Notified the Hunter New England Public Health Unit, and other required agencies;
- Immediately closed the facility to visitors (no visitors will be allowed entry);
- Ensured residents are being cared for in their rooms and with appropriate physical distancing observed;
- Equipped employees with full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and ensured ongoing reliable supply;
- Commenced COVID-19 testing and regular temperature checks of residents and employees;
- Continue active screening and temperature checks for any person entering the home;
- Unfortunately, group activities have been temporarily stopped;
- There will be in-room dining for all residents; and
- Commenced regular intensive cleaning of the facility.

Am I safe to continue working?

You are safe to continue to provide resident care because you are trained and prepared for a COVID-19 outbreak.

Just like during any infectious outbreak, your training means you will know how to provide resident care safely by following our strict infection prevention and control procedures, including the correct use of PPE.

Full outbreak PPE (gloves, masks, face shields, gowns) has been provided and will continue to be supplied as needed to all employees. COVID-19 testing of every person on site has commenced.

The Public Health Unit has been notified and Calvary is working with the relevant government health authorities to ensure the safest possible environment for residents and employees under lockdown.



Exposure to a known case of COVID-19 while wearing PPE.

If you have provided care for a person who is identified to have COVID-19 and you have worn appropriate personal protective equipment you are not required to take any leave.

For the safety of residents and staff, any employee who has been notified that they are a close contact of a positive case (with no or unknown PPE) must immediately return home to self-quarantine and monitor their health for 14 days. You will need to notify your Manager by phone, provide a certificate from a health practitioner, take special COVID leave and seek immediate COVID-19 testing. In these circumstances, employees may receive a total payment of 14 days COVID leave equivalent to their rostered shifts.

Employees in self-quarantine are not permitted to return to the workplace until 14 days have passed and a negative COVID-19 test result has been received. For more information about what is required of you in self-quarantine, please visit www.health.gov.au

Are the residents safe?

Residents are being kept safe, restricted to their rooms and provided with their usual care with some changes under outbreak conditions. Group activities and group dining have been suspended. Residents will be provided with their meals and hydration, medication, exercise, medical care and phone/video call contact with families in their rooms until further notice.

In addition to these first actions, our care continuity plan will ensure we maintain the clinical and non-clinical employees and other support services necessary to support our staff to meet the individual care needs of our residents safely during an outbreak.

Families can also call the facility's phone number which has been diverted to our call centre team. Our call centre team is operating 24 hours 7 days a week to manage the increase in calls and ensure every family receives information in a timely way. More information and regular situation updates can be found at: www.calvarycoronavirusupdates.org.au

What do I need to remember?

We understand this will be concerning news for our employees. Our first priority and focus is the safety, health and wellbeing of the people in our care, including you, our employees, at this challenging time.

- **Notify your Manager immediately if you have been notified that you are a close contact of a positive case, or are showing symptoms of COVID-19, or are in any way unwell. Please notify your Manager via phone – do not come into work to do this.**
- **COVID-19 symptoms include:**
 - Fever;
 - Respiratory symptoms; including:
 - Coughing;
 - Sore throat; and/or
 - Shortness of breath.

Other symptoms can include runny nose, headache, muscle or joint pain, nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting, loss of sense of smell, altered sense of taste, loss of appetite and fatigue.

- **Wear PPE as advised. If you have any questions, please speak with your Manager.** Your facility's Outbreak Management Plan is in place to keep residents and our employees safe during a COVID-19 outbreak.
- **Continue good hand hygiene and social/physical distancing.** Frequent hand washing and keeping 1.5 metres separation where possible in the workplace, in public and at home are important ways to avoid transmission.



- **Families, GPs and contractors will be kept informed.** An Outbreak Communications Team will be calling the listed Person Responsible (family) of each resident with a situation update today and then regularly during the outbreak period. GPs and contractors will be updated by email.
- **Follow the COVID-19 media protocol.** If you are contacted by a journalist, do not answer any questions. Simply record the journalist's name, media agency and contact details and notify the Facility Manager.

Where can I get more information?

You will be kept informed by your Manager and/or Team Leader as the situation develops. If you would like more information, please visit Calvary's staff COVID-19 updates and resources site regularly at www.calvarystaffupdates.org.au

If you are experiencing any form of distress or anxiety, please speak to your Manager in the first instance. If you find you require additional support, please reach out to your Employee Assistance Provider (EAP) via Calvary Connect at:

<http://connect.calvarycare.org.au/EmployeeEssentials/Conditions/pages/Employee-assistance-program.aspx>

Remember while this is a difficult and evolving situation, you have the training and skills necessary to respond to a COVID-19 outbreak and bring residents and your colleagues through safely.

Thank you for all that you are doing to ensure our residents continue to receive the safest possible care with empathy and compassion in this challenging time.