



# HOLY FAMILY SERVICES

*A Ministry of the Sisters of  
the Holy Family of Nazareth*

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15<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## UPDATE ON VISITING REQUIREMENTS

Dear residents, families and staff,

I would like to update you as we transition into the Christmas celebration period in relation to visiting and resident outings. We were hoping we would have better news, unfortunately despite the relaxation of rules for the general public, NSW Health has advised us today that since the case numbers are going up again and there has been an increase in outbreaks in aged care homes from 6 homes to 25 homes in the past two weeks, the current Public Health Order will continue as is for visiting. There are also cases of the Omicron variant amongst these outbreaks. They also advised that the majority of cases in the community are occurring in unvaccinated children under 10yrs, and those between 20yrs and 30yrs old, so we are asking you to be mindful of this if you are visiting or taking your loved one out over the Christmas period, as we know that older people are more vulnerable even if they are vaccinated.

NSW Health has released a visiting guide for Christmas which is to be read in conjunction with the Chief Health Officers advice, Public Health Order and the facilities own risk assessment which I have summarised below. These are available on NSW Health website. NSW Health also have made it clear to us that this could change overnight if cases increase, which we will advise you if this occurs.

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> December are public holidays for us, as are Monday, Tuesday, and Friday 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> December. We understand the importance of family at Christmas, so at the moment (unless the Chief Health Officer changes things) we will be having visiting as per the requirements outlined below on 25<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Day, and all week commencing from the 27<sup>th</sup> December. We have had to put on additional staff to do the screening required as administration is closed during this period. We are asking for and will appreciate your patience with the staff member who will be completing the screening at this time.

### ***What does this mean for visiting?***

- **Two fully vaccinated visitors per resident per day** aged 12 years or over can visit Monday to Friday (exception Christmas Day)
- Booking must be **made on Zipline in advance** for visiting between 9am and 430pm Monday to Friday (except Christmas Day) or you can call reception on 96788200 to book
- The visitor must:
  - Show a negative PCR that was taken with 72hrs of the visit (these are free) OR
  - Show a photograph of a negative Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) home test dated the day of the visit OR
  - Have a negative RAT taken at Holy Family Services at your cost (see below)
- A maximum of 2 unvaccinated children under age 12 years accompanying a fully vaccinated visitor can visit under certain circumstances, but will require a RAT on the day of the visit at the cost of the visitor. We will not do the RAT on a child under 12 years. It will be up to the parent either do a home RAT or purchase a kit from us and an RN will supervise the parent taking the test
- All visitors must always wear a mask during the visit, maintain 1.5m social distancing at all times and wash or sanitise your hands on entry

- As always, exemptions can be made for end of life visiting

### **Visitor Screening**

All visitors must adhere to the usual entry and screening requirements. We are required to exclude any visitors who:

- Are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 at least 14 days prior to visiting, except for children under 12 years.
- Have COVID-19 symptoms.
- Have had a COVID-19 test and are waiting on the test result.
- Are a close or casual contact of a person with confirmed COVID-19 unless they have completed their self-isolation and testing requirements.
- Are under a self-isolation order
- Have been to a country of concern in the last 14 days
- Have been to any other countries in the last 14 days, unless they are:
  - Fully vaccinated and at least 7 days have passed since their arrival in NSW and they have received a result from their day 6 test

### **Costs for PCR and RAT**

- PCR tests – these are free and can be obtained in several testing locations and are the most accurate type of test
- Home RAT kits – can be purchased at some supermarkets and chemists from around \$10 to \$20
- RATs at HFS – we are no longer receiving free RAT kits from the Government. Each test kit costs us around \$7. Protective Equipment and RN time to supervise the testing costs \$13. We will provide these at a cost price to visitors
  - Cost for us to do the RAT for you:
    - one visitor \$20,
    - 2 visitors together, \$27.
    - each additional kit if required for a child is \$7.

### **What does this mean for resident outings?**

Residents can leave the facility to go out and/or attend family gatherings but must abide by the Public Health (COVID-19 General Order) 2021 as outlined in existing NSW Health advice:

- We will ensure that residents are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment, infection control and mask wearing advice when they leave the facility.
- Residents are to be guided about COVID safe behaviours, including physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- The event complies with the current Public Health (COVID-19 19 General Order) 2021.
- Families of residents must also consider advice here when taking their loved ones out of the facility to attend family gatherings. Families may wish to voluntarily have a test (e.g. rapid antigen test) prior to the event

Families must advise us of the details of the event, for example how long they are going for, the location, number of people, general ages of the people attending (eg adults or children), etc, as we are required to document this as part of our risk assessment for Government.

Residents will not generally be required to isolate on return unless there is a perceived risk, however we will be asking them to complete a RAT on their return, a PCR on day 3 and we will monitor them for symptoms as we currently do.

We really want Christmas to be special for all our residents and families, despite the challenges of COVID. We are always here to answer any questions or assist you, so please feel free to contact myself or one of our clinical team on 96788200 if you have any questions.

I trust you will all have a joyful and Merry Christmas, and may God be with you and bless you all during Advent and the Christmas period.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alexandra Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "A".

**Alexandra Davis**  
Chief Executive Officer