



Our Residents and Representatives  
Elizabeth Jenkins Place and Pacific Lodge  
Residential Aged Care Centres  
The Salvation Army Aged Care

Monday 27 April 2020

Dear all,

Today, the NSW Department of Health has declared that the Northern Beaches Local Government Area is a COVID-19 hot spot. For your reference I include the link to the Department's site:- <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/stats-nsw.aspx#increased>

### **What is a COVID-19 hot spot?**

A hot spot is an area where a State or Territory Department of Health has identified a heightened level of concern about COVID-19 infection rates and therefore an increased risk of community transmission cases. The recommendation is that if you are living or working in an area identified as a hot spot and you have symptoms such as a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath, you must be tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible.

### **What does this mean for Elizabeth Jenkins Place and Pacific Lodge?**

Your Centre is located in a hot spot area. As a result, of the heightened risk identified by the Department of Health we will move to cease visitors to these two Centres effective Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April, after the afternoon visiting hours and limiting residents leaving the sites. There are some exceptions to that – visitors will be permitted if they are visiting a loved one who is in final stage palliative care. Our residents may exit the premises if they are doing so for a medical or dental appointment or to visit a close family member who is also palliating.

In anticipation of feedback from you, I will identify that this approach is entirely in keeping with the comments by the Prime Minister on Friday where he said *"Now, there are quite valid reasons why you would have exemptions, particularly as we've seen in north-west Tasmania at the moment, or what we've seen in western Sydney or in other places. That is entirely sensible as to why you would have restrictions that are greater than the national baseline in those circumstances."* The exemptions that he is referencing are changes to the existing visitor requirements.

We have introduced an addendum to those measures outlined in that letter to mirror criteria developed by the Tasmanian Government, who have directed that visitors are not allowed to enter residential aged care centres. There is a provision that a person is permitted to enter the Centre if they are:

- a) a key support person for a resident of the residential aged care facility who has a diagnosed medical condition; and
- b) present at the premises at the request of the operator of the residential aged care facility and for the purpose providing essential support to the resident by reducing



distress or confusion that has occurred in respect of the resident as a result of that person's medical condition.

Should your Centre Manager and our senior operational and clinical leadership team feel there is an assessed need for further support, you will be contacted to develop a specific interaction plan for your loved one. As always you are encouraged to reach out to the Centre by phone or email should you require an update on the wellbeing of your loved one.

**When does the Centre lift the visitor moratorium and resident movement restrictions?**

The relevant State and Territory Departments of Health remove and add COVID-19 hotspots regularly as they deem the risk in a location has diminished or increased. This is the case for the Northern Beaches LGA which was placed on the list this morning. We are monitoring that list on a daily basis and if the hotspot designation linked to your Centre is removed then we will advise you of that.

Following that removal, we do need a day or two to organise and roster staff to undertake the reinstated visitor screening. At this point we will reopen the Centre to visitors as per the current limitations.

This will mean that your residents and families will have a very clear trigger and timeline for the removal of the visitor moratorium and resident movement restrictions.

**Keeping in contact during this period**

The team will ensure that we facilitate regular contact in different ways ("visitor windows", video chat, drop off a special treat, additional updates from the Centre Manager, etc.). These are now being activated and the teams from the Centres will share that detail with you as these will enable our residents to remain connected with their families.

If you have any feedback, please feel free to send me an email at [Richard.deHaast@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:Richard.deHaast@salvationarmy.org.au).

*Many thanks for your understanding and support.*

*Richard*

Richard de Haast  
National Director  
The Salvation Army Aged Care