



12 October 2020

Our Residents and Representatives
The Salvation Army Aged Care

RE: THE ROYAL COMMISSION COVID-19 REPORT

Dear All,

As you may be aware, on 1 October 2020, the Royal Commission released its COVID-19 report. According to a media release on the Royal Commission website, "The report is the result of a hearing of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety into the impact of COVID-19 on aged care, which was held in Sydney from 10 to 13 August 2020."

I would like to advise you that The Salvation Army Aged Care endorses all of the six recommendations made within the report which are as follows:

- 1) The Australian Government should report to Parliament by no later than 1 December 2020 on the implementation of these recommendations.
- 2) The Australian Government should immediately fund providers that apply for funding to ensure there are adequate staff available to allow continued visits to people living in residential aged care by their families and friends.
- 3) The Australian Government should urgently create Medicare Benefits Schedule items to increase the provision of allied health services, including mental health services, to people in aged care during the pandemic. Any barriers, whether real or perceived, to allied health professionals being able to enter residential aged care facilities should be removed unless justified on genuine public health grounds.
- 4) The Australian Government should establish a national aged care plan for COVID-19 through the National Cabinet in consultation with the aged care sector.
- 5) All residential aged care homes should have one or more trained infection control officers as a condition of accreditation. The training requirements for these officers should be set by the aged care advisory body we propose.
- 6) The Australian Government should arrange with the States and Territories to deploy accredited infection prevention and control experts into residential aged care homes to provide training, assist with the preparation of outbreak management plans and assist with outbreaks.

Should you wish to review the report, you can do so on the Royal Commission website or at the following link: <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/aged-care-and-covid-19-a-special-report.pdf>

The Salvation Army Aged Care will continue to take a proactive approach to supporting the Government to achieve these recommendations by reviewing our visitor access process, engaging in support for staff and in particular for our centres at Risk Level 5 or in lockdown, building on our infection control knowledge base and our collaborative approach to gathering feedback. In terms of feedback, we have been hosting collaborative COVID-19 Round Table discussions to ascertain how we can improve our response to the pandemic within our centres and we have conducted resident and representative and staff surveys about our



communication. Should you have any feedback, you are encouraged to fill out the Your Matters Matter form available at the kiosk in the centre or on our website.

In terms of the tone of the report, I would like to highlight how it notes the pressures placed on all Aged Care staff throughout the pandemic and how complimentary it is regarding the resilience that staff have consistently shown.

On behalf of The Salvation Army Aged Care, I would also like to thank you for your support and patience as residents and family members of our centres whilst we continue to modify our practice alongside the feedback and advice of the industry and our consumers.

As always, if you have any questions, please get in touch with your Centre Manager as they would be happy to assist.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sjukes'.

Samantha Jukes

General Manager – Residential Services
The Salvation Army Aged Care