

3 March 2020

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE RE CORONAVIRUS

FOR ALL INDEPENDENT LIVING UNIT RESIDENTS

As you will be well aware, there is currently a global outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19). While the majority of confirmed cases have been reported from mainland China, the number of countries with reported cases is increasing on a daily basis, including Australia.

The Australian Government Department of Health is providing daily alerts with the latest medical advice and official reports which we are monitoring closely.

What we know today is that the incubation period for the coronavirus is 14 days, although there are some reports of a longer incubation period. Symptoms may include fever, flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat, headaches and difficulty breathing.

Older people are particularly susceptible to any infection, including coronavirus, with those in residential aged care settings some of the most vulnerable in our community.

As you are living in a community setting, it is very important that we all work together to reduce the risk of spread of any infection. A common sense approach and careful attention to good hygiene practices is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infection.

We ask that you read and follow the guidelines below to help reduce the risk to all in our community.

If you have recently travelled or transited through China or Iran

If you have recently visited or transited through mainland China or Iran OR been in close contact with someone who is a confirmed case of coronavirus, you will already be aware of the special restrictions that have been applied to you by the Australian Government with respect to your isolation requirements.

Please refer to and follow the 'what you need to know' and 'isolation guidance' information sheets at www.health.gov.au

To help limit the spread of coronavirus, Uniting AgeWell also requests that you:

- Do not visit any of our residential care facilities, services or programs for a period of 14 days after your return OR until you have been tested for the virus and received a negative result.
- Avoid contact with other residents and staff; only those who usually live with you should be in your unit or apartment.
- Minimise exposure to others by not going to public places or using the communal facilities at your Uniting AgeWell ILU site.
- Inform the Housing Manager, Shane Johnson on (03) 6282 1148 if this situation applies to you so that appropriate precautions can be implemented at your site.

Corporate Services

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Uniting AgeWell

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An organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia

unitingagewell.org

If you have recently returned from overseas travel

If you, or someone who lives with you, has returned from a country or region that is at higher risk for COVID-19, you should monitor your health for 14 days and refrain from visiting a Uniting AgeWell facility, service or program during this period. This is particularly important given the vulnerability of our clients.

Please go to www.health.gov.au/covid19-travellers for the current list of higher risk countries (noting this list continues to evolve), and other important information sheets.

For the best protection of those around you, it is recommended that you practise social distancing and avoid crowds for 14 days after leaving the higher risk country or region. This includes refraining from use of the communal facilities at your site. We would also ask that you notify the Housing Manager, Shane Johnson.

If you live in an apartment, it is safe for you to visit the garden but you should wear a surgical mask to minimise the risk to others and move quickly through any common area.

What about family and visitors to your home?

If you have family or visitors who have recently returned from China, Iran or a country or region at higher risk for COVID-19 or they have been in close contact with a proven case of coronavirus, the same guidance as above applies and you should request they not visit you.

If you become unwell

If you become unwell for any reason, please do not attend a Uniting AgeWell facility, service or program. If you suspect you may have symptoms of the coronavirus or influenza, please seek medical attention.

How you can help prevent the spread of infection

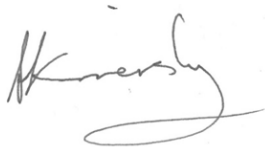
Everyone should practise good hand hygiene and other measures to protect against infections. These measures include:

- Regularly washing your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet
- Covering your mouth and nose with tissues or inside of elbow when coughing or sneezing
- Avoid touching your face and mouth after touching surfaces
- If unwell, avoid contact with others (touching, kissing, hugging and other intimate contact)

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au or call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

We all have a responsibility for protecting each other against the spread of infection and we thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Kinnersly
Chief Executive Officer
Uniting AgeWell