



Media Release

Tuesday, 19 January 2021

Warrigal welcomes news of early COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

An announcement made by the Australian Government with plans to bring forward the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine to February 2021 has been welcomed by Warrigal, along with news that aged care staff and residents are priorities for early access to the vaccine.

The decision on whether the vaccination will be made mandatory for aged care employees now rests with State/Territory Governments as part of their public health orders, as is the case for flu vaccinations.

Warrigal CEO, Mark Sewell, said Warrigal strongly supports Aged and Community Services Australia's (ACSA) position that it should be at least strongly recommended, if not a requirement, for all employees and residents to receive the vaccination.

"Whether the vaccine should be compulsory for aged care residents and workers is a question for the Government to address, but we must remember that older people are the most at risk in our communities and that they are supported by workers who are the front line in this pandemic."

"Aged care workers have a role to play in supporting these public health programs to ensure that they, and those they care for, are vaccinated." Mr Sewell said.

Since March 2020, Warrigal has been focused on protecting its community from COVID-19, updating outbreak preparedness plans and taking many other serious protective actions under the guidelines and direction of NSW Health and the Public Health Department and will continue to follow any future advice on vaccination.

"The safety of our residents, customers, families and staff remains our utmost priority and we will continue to review our procedures and take strong action as needed to ensure we keep them safe."

"We do acknowledge that vaccination alone will not guarantee our residents and staff will be safe from COVID-19, but continued practice of other prevention and control measures such as the use of PPE, and prevention measures by the community, for example not visiting homes if at all unwell will help to keep residents and staff safe from COVID-19." said Mr Sewell.

The rollout of a national vaccination program requires significant planning and logistics. The current plan is for the Commonwealth to manage nationally the vaccinations of residents in residential aged care. Warrigal is interested to learn what the protocols and plans are and will communicate new developments as more information becomes available.

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*Please note Warrigal Care has changed its name to **Warrigal** and should be referred to as **Warrigal**. Thank you*