



From the Chief Operating Officer

Craig Smith

Warrigal

A world where older people
feel known, loved,
and connected.

7 March 2025

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

Welcome to the March update, the start of autumn, where the temperature cools and the duration of daylight becomes shorter. There are a number of events that will be celebrated during March including St Patrick's Day, Harmony Week and International Women's Day. We are also working closely with the residents and General Practitioners at all our Care Homes to provide influenza vaccinations over the coming months.

Welcome to Warrigal

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the 45 permanent residents who moved into Warrigal during February. There were also 57 residents who came in for respite and may also stay with us permanently. I hope that the transition into your new home was warm and welcoming, and thank you for choosing to make Warrigal your home. If you have any feedback on the journey into Warrigal, please share it with myself or the local management team.

New Strengthened Standards

As outlined in previous updates, Standard 1 is fundamental to the new Strengthened Standards that will commence on 1 July 2025 which focuses on "The Person." This standard forms the foundation for all other standards, with four key components:

- Person-Centred Care
- Dignity, Respect and Privacy,
- Choice, Independence and Quality of Life
- Transparency and Agreements

In my past two updates, I have summarised Warrigal's responsibilities with the first two components, and today I will be highlighting the requirements for the remaining components in Standard 1.

Warrigal must support residents to exercise choice and make decisions about services they want or need in a timely manner. In some cases this may require the resident to provide informed consent. Essentially, we need to support each person to live the best life they can by enabling positive risk-taking that promotes the resident's autonomy and quality of life.



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The last area focuses on resident agreements and the need to provide information that enables informed decisions to be made, and they have time to review options and seek external advice.

International Women's Day

International Women's Day is celebrated globally on 8 March. This year's theme, #MarchForward, invites us to recognise women's achievements across all fields – from healthcare and education to business and community leadership – while expressing gratitude for the profound impact women have in shaping our families, workplaces, and communities. Aged care is a sector that is predominantly staffed by women, and the work that is undertaken on a daily basis ensures that our residents are known, loved and connected. I would like to personally thank all of the dedicated women who both work at Warrigal, and those who advocate and support our residents.

Dining Experience

With the introduction of the new Strengthened Standards, the Dining Experience will be a new Standard that we have been preparing to implement over the past year. This has included reviews from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, Plena Healthcare and internal training through the Maggie Beer Foundation. Food and dining are such an important factor in our residents' daily lives, and accommodating the many different preferences can be challenging. These challenges have been a continual source of discussion at the Food Focus Forums held at each home. In order to support the homes and increase the focus on food and dining, Warrigal has commenced the recruitment of a Hospitality General Manager who will work closely with catering teams at all of our homes.

COVID-19

At the end of February, there were 549 active COVID-19 cases reported in 106 active outbreaks across Australia. There were two outbreaks experienced at Warrigal during February, both with significant numbers. Warrigal Stirling had an outbreak that commenced on 13 February with 34 residents testing positive, while Warrigal Shell Cove commenced on 17 February with 50 residents testing positive, including 24 in the Memory Support Unit. In reviewing the outbreaks, the Infection Coordinator has identified that by not undertaking weekly surveillance testing, the number of residents testing positive during an outbreak is higher as transmission occurred before residents displayed any symptoms.



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While there will be no changes to our current protocols, these will be reviewed at the end of March and if there is an increase in outbreaks or the number of residents impacted continues to be high, it is likely that weekly surveillance testing will commence again in April.

Visitor Management System

While the Visitor Management System (VMS) was initiated as a result of the need to monitor the temperatures of anyone entering a care home, it also provided the ability for declarations regarding any symptoms that a person may have and, importantly, to monitor the number of visits being made. In the month of February, there were 11,899 people who signed in with the VMS, and there were 310 residents that did not receive a visit. I understand that it may be an inconvenience to continually use the VMS when entering the care home, but your observance is appreciated as it enables us to provide a higher level of care to our residents.

Diversity and Inclusion

Warrigal has developed a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that ensures a comprehensive approach to fostering diversity and inclusion across teams and the organisation as a whole. The plan is designed to provide staff with a framework to improve access to services for all older people and make sure those services meet the individual needs of residents.

This strategy involves a commitment to;

- Building an inclusive workplace that respects and values diversity of identity, customs, cultures and beliefs.
- Having our services accessible to all older people from diverse backgrounds including those from special needs groups.
- Delivering our services in a manner that respects and values the identity, customs, cultures and beliefs of our clients.
- Preventing harassment and discrimination of any kind.

Payment Options at Albion Park Rail

I would like to let you know that payments can be made directly at the Albion Park Rail Residential Care Home reception for those needing to do so. This provides a



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convenient alternative for anyone who previously visited the Albion Park Rail office and saves an unnecessary trip to our new Warrigal Central in Oak Flats.

The Albion Park Rail Residential Care Home reception is fully equipped to process payments for any Warrigal service. When calling in to make a payment, it is helpful if you are able to provide your Customer ID number, and although cash is not our preferred method of payment, if you do pay cash you will need the correct amount as we will not be able to provide change.

We are working towards implementing payment options across all our residential care homes and will inform you once it has been completed. This improvement aligns with our vision of creating a world where older people feel known, loved, and connected.

I sincerely wish to thank all residents and relatives for supporting Warrigal. As always if you have any feedback, please contact me by emailing warrigal@warrigal.com.au.

Yours Sincerely,

Craig Smith
Chief of Operations