



**Vacenti Update on Coronavirus - COVID-19 - Update no 26 – Release of Restrictions  
Information as at Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

Good afternoon

Some welcome news for all. You may have heard the media release from the Qld Minister for Health this morning regarding the easing of restrictions. Our apologies for taking this time to get information to you but we have to wait for official confirmation of exactly which restrictions have been lifted. We received that very late this afternoon.

**Aged Care Direction No 10 and Visitor Restrictions**

We have been advised that the List of Local Government Areas applied to the Aged Care Direction (No.10) has been changed and all aged care services in Queensland have now been classed as “Unrestricted”. This means that all Vacenti homes are now open for general family visits per pre-lockdown conditions.

**Visiting Hours**

Vacenti homes are open for visits Monday to Saturday during normal hours of 8:30am to 4:30pm commencing tomorrow, Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September. Per Aged Care Direction No 10, residents may have an unlimited number of visits in a day, but no more than 2 people at a time.

Sunday and after-hours visits will continue to be by appointment only.

We respectfully ask visiting families to:

- Not visit if you are feeling ill, have a temperature greater than 37.5C or visited a declared COVID - 19 hotspot;
- Keep your visit to the resident's rooms or outdoor areas. Visits cannot be undertaken in communal areas.
- Follow the directions of staff.

**Use of Masks by Families and Visitors**

Whilst our homes are in an “Unrestricted Zone”, families and visitors are not required to wear masks. However, should you feel more comfortable to wear a mask inside our home, please feel free to do so. This includes the use of cloth masks. Staff and contractors working on 2 or more sites must wear single use surgical masks.

Should any of our homes be placed in a “Restricted Zone” in the future, then cloth masks will no longer be acceptable. We will advise you of those requirements at that time.

**Taking residents off site**

Under Aged Care Direction No 10, residents are now permitted to leave the facility, including:-

- *to receive or access health care,*
- *to attend small family gatherings,*
- *to undertake exercise,*
- *to receive end of life or palliative care, or*
- *to attend a funeral.*

Residents who form part of a familial group (for example, couples, siblings) or close friends are permitted to leave the facility together.

Vacenti agrees that mental health of our residents is almost as important as staying COVID free. Vacenti endorses small private outings for your loved one for emotional support.

We urge residents and families to strongly consider the reason, and what public exposure is involved when you go off site. Indoor public areas such as shopping centres, food halls, gaming areas are a much higher risk than small outdoor, well-spaced and low contact areas. Indoor public areas such as shopping centres, food halls, gaming areas do not meet the intent of Aged Care Direction No 10. Vacenti has no control over the level of infection control undertaken in very public areas. We ask you take heed of suggestions and advice given by our staff as to proposed outings. Our staff have a responsibility to protect the whole resident community as well as the welfare of each individual.

As previously advised, both the Commonwealth and Qld Departments of Health require us to undertake a proactive risk assessment on each outing before residents leave the site and on return. What we need to know is:

1. the location of the outing, to assist with contact tracing should it be needed;
2. the type of venue you are going to;
3. the size of the gathering;

and discuss any additional precautions that you may need to take.

We **require** all residents and families to complete the Resident Leave Register at reception, both on exiting and return to assist us in our risk assessment and surveillance protocols. Sign out is particularly important for contact tracing. Be very vigilant about social distancing and personal hygiene whilst you are off site.

### **Qld State Government Elections**

A reminder that the Qld State Government Elections will be held Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2020. Whilst we have not received advice from the Electoral Commission about their visiting our homes to enable voting, we believe it is unlikely based on earlier experiences relating to COVID. Should residents wish to vote then we suggest they, or their families apply for a Postal Vote through the Electoral Commission website.

Should a resident wish to withdraw from voting then they, or the designated EPOA, can complete an "Objection Claim that an Elector Should Not Be Enrolled" form available on the Australian Electoral Commission website.