

Lighthouse

Family News

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Thank you

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

I am very relieved to report that to date, we still don't have any COVID 19 infections in relation to staff or clients. We need to continue to maintain a strong focus on the two main prevention strategies; hand hygiene and physical distancing because these two practices are key to the reduction of COVID 19 infections – and have ultimately resulted in the 'flattening' of the infection rate. (We are using the term 'physical distancing' with the same meaning as 'social distancing').

It is tempting to think that because of the reduction in the number of infections, it is time to relax the prevention protocols. However, this is reported to be a time to exercise great caution. Should the protocols be relaxed too soon, the infection rate could increase with the result that the situation would become far worse in this instance than in the first.

Therefore, we will maintain our current practices in relation to hand hygiene and physical distancing until we are advised by SA Health, that it is safe to change our approach.

Physical Distancing – Social Connection

As many of you will be aware, we have taken a very strong line concerning allied health appointments (and other activities not considered necessary). If an appointment is not deemed essential, we have strongly advised that it should not happen - as a means of maintaining physical distancing.

However, with the assistance of some creative and competent allied health workers, we have managed to maintain social connection with some allied health appointments by using IT programs such as Skype or Zoom. This has largely been a very positive experience for clients and staff – and for many families, it has opened up new possibilities that were not thought possible.

There are many people who we wish to thank for this; Families for agreeing to 'give it a go', staff who have been prepared to try and support something new, and allied health practitioners who have invariably been very gracious about using their expertise in different ways. It is reported that clients are engaging well with these new opportunities.

In all, out of adversity, there are many exciting and positive initiatives.

Protective Personal Equipment (PPE)

In the media it has been widely reported that there is a shortage of gowns, face masks and other protective equipment. It is great that we can reassure you that we will have additional supplies of appropriate gowns and face masks available from tomorrow. This means that we have the capacity to protect our staff and clients if circumstances dictate PPE is needed.

Facebook

Staff have forwarded some wonderful photos of our clients engaged in a range of fun activities. Many of these have been uploaded onto our Facebook page – and the saying that *'a picture tells a thousand words'* is really apt. It is intended that where possible, these photos will be forwarded to families. We will follow up with all homes to encourage workers or household members to take photos and send them to families. Please note that we are careful to seek family approval to include client photos in our newsletters and other publications.

New activities that maybe appropriate for clients are forwarded to staff and added to our intranet and our website so that the range of options continues to be extended.

Flu Vaccinations

Many thanks to families who have responded positively to our offer for clients to participate in a flu vaccination schedule with CHG. As reported in previous newsletters, this will not prevent a COVID-19 infection, but it will promote client wellbeing with regard to an influenza infection.

Thank you

Finally, thank you to families for your collaboration with us during this particularly challenging time. We also appreciate the opportunity to explain our position where it has been a concern, and to create options to find different ways of addressing client needs if the usual method is not advisable/possible.

It is also important to acknowledge the special efforts that our staff have made to cope with this unprecedented time. The photos of clients enjoying themselves highlight the great work that is happening in homes, with the aims that they are *'... safe, happy and living life well'*.

Marj Ellis
CEO