

Protecting the elderly is a priority. Restrictions have now been placed on visits to aged care facilities across Australia.

These are precautionary, preventative steps, made in the best interests of our community\*.

### **Who is restricted from entering an aged care facility?**

The following visitors and staff (including visiting workers) should not be permitted to enter the facility:

- Those who have returned from overseas in the last 14 days
- Those who have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Those with fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath)
- Those who have not been vaccinated against influenza (after 1 May)
- Facilities may have further restrictions in place. It is recommended all visitors call ahead to check

### **What should aged care facilities be doing now to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission?**

Other than in exceptional circumstances, Aged care facilities should implement the following measures for restricting visits and visitors to reduce the risk of transmission to residents, including:

- Limiting visits to a short duration
- Limiting visits to a maximum of two immediate social supports (family members, close friends) or professional service or advocacy at one time, per day
- Visits should be conducted in a resident's room, outdoors, or in a specific area designated by the aged care facility, rather than communal areas where the risk of transmission to residents is greater
- No large group visits or gatherings, including social activities or entertainment, should be permitted at this time
- No school groups of any size should be allowed to visit aged care facilities
- Visitors should also be encouraged to practise social distancing practices where possible, including maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres
- Children aged 16 years or less must be permitted only by exception, as they are generally unable to comply with hygiene measures. Exemptions can be assessed on a case-by-case basis, for example, where the resident is in a palliative care scenario
- Measures such as phone or video calls must be accessible to all residents to enable more regular communication with family members. Family and friends should be encouraged to maintain contact with residents by phone and other social communication apps, as appropriate

### **What about aged care workers?**

The following visitors and staff (including visiting workers) should not be permitted to enter the facility:

- From 1 May, aged care workers must have their influenza vaccination to work in or visit an aged care facility
- Residential aged care workers must not go to work if they have a fever or symptoms of a respiratory illness

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\* The State Government will be using powers under the Public Health Act and Emergency Management Act to enforce these new rules. Penalties of up to \$50,000 will apply.