



St Basil's Homes for the Aged in Victoria

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We write to provide you with an update of the status of the outbreak that we are facing at our home.

Unfortunately, our situation has deteriorated further

We have now received some more results of a secondary testing of all of our residents who were tested on site on Sunday at 2 PM.

Unfortunately, we have received another 29 positive test results for residents who were tested last Sunday. Most of the results were received last night and all relatives have been notified.

That makes it a total of 47 positive cases from all of our residents who have now been tested - most of them twice. This includes 15 out of 18 residents of our dementia wing which have tested positive.

We have a total of 18 staff members who have tested positive and have been stood down. In addition, we have many close contacts of infected staff who have also been stood down.

We have isolated all of the residents who have tested positive together in "COVID wings" in order to prevent any further spread of the virus.

All the residents who have tested negative are in separate wings away from the "contaminated" areas.

We have arranged for Medical Practitioner visits and assessments on site and we are having doctors and nurses from Northern Health RECIPE team and Geriatricians on site for continuous assessment of all residents and they will remain on site all day until further notice. Based on these assessments the RECIPE team will transfer infected residents to Hospitals as needed. So far, we have transferred 8 residents to Hospitals for further treatment. From the rest of our residents most are asymptomatic, and they are showing few symptoms of the virus, other than lack of energy.

All authorities are aware of the current position and they are in full agreement with all of the measures that we have implemented. We want to assure you that we are doing everything possible to overcome what is a difficult situation. All our dedicated staff are working tirelessly in providing a safe and comfortable living environment for our residents in their home under very challenging circumstances. The health and safety of our residents and our staff is our first priority and we appreciate your support in the measures we are taking to overcome this difficult situation that we are all in.

We have now been advised that the remainder of our staff who remains on site are also probably "contaminated" and need to isolate. We had a meeting today at 3 PM with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner Ms Janet Anderson, DHHS Executive Director and senior staff, Department of Health (Commonwealth) senior staff and Doctors from Northern Health at which:

We were directed by the authorities that our regular staff MUST under the direction of authorities vacate their positions tomorrow morning, go into isolation and submit to further testing and start returning as soon as they are cleared by further testing as approved.

We resisted that direction as much as we could but unfortunately Victorian Public Health experts, who are doctors, said that this is a course that we MUST follow.

It has been agreed that provided our staff members who leave tomorrow test negative on Sunday 26 July or later they are allowed to return on Thursday 30 July with a negative test and take over the management of the home.

Between tomorrow and the 30th July the home will be run by replacement staff which will be provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health. Staffing level and care will be monitored by doctors and nurses who will be on site and work for the RECIPE team from Northern Hospital.

We will update you again tomorrow.

We have the email address for most of you and we will continue to update you promptly. ***However, for any of you who have not received direct notification by email we ask you that you provide us with your email address so that we can inform you promptly.*** Please send requests to be added to our emails to manager@stbasilsvic.com.au

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios who is devastated with the news like the rest of us will be issuing a statement tomorrow and it will be emailed to you all.

Thank you for your understanding and your support and we wish that you and your family stay safe in these difficult times.

Vicky Kos

Manager and on behalf of the Chairman of the Board of St Basil's Homes for the Aged in Victoria