



PRESS OFFICE

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia

Media Release

27-07-2020

St Basil's Homes for the Aged – Victoria, together with the Holy Archdiocese as a whole, are greatly pained by the loss of lives and mourn our loved ones who have now fallen asleep. These individuals will remain in our prayers as will their families.

As we move forward, we remain committed in ensuring that the pastoral needs of each resident and their families are met. Clergy will continue to facilitate pastoral interactions with families affected, using modern technology, to provide comfort.

Yesterday evening, a representative of our Holy Archdiocese and the Chairman of St. Basil's Homes for the Aged in Victoria, joined the residents and their families, in a meeting organised by the Australian Government. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss our shared concerns which are the result of the outbreak of COVID-19 in our facility, the interim measures introduced and also our acknowledging of and agreeing with a notice to agree issued by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. We have immediately implemented the requirements within the notice as agreed with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, relating to the monitoring and management of the COVID-19 outbreaks at St. Basil's and we will continue to cooperate fully with both levels of government so that we can address the needs of our residents and their families.

We understand that the direction that we received from the Victorian Government for our regular staff to self-isolate from 9 AM on Wednesday 22 July was an act of precaution for the health and well-being of our residents and our staff during this testing time, which is also our priority and it is shared by both the Australian and Victorian Governments and the Board of Directors of the Home.

At present we are fully co-operating with the current management of the home which has been brought in by the Commonwealth Government and who are now in control of the home from the date that we had to leave. We are pleased to see many of our Covid-19 infected residents are being transferred to hospitals for further treatment. We await the test results of our employees and as soon as they are cleared we are eager to return and continue in our mission of caring for our residents.

As of today, the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre, established by the Australian Government will co-ordinate and expand resources to tackle the challenge of COVID-19 in aged care services. This will enable effective responses for all Aged Care Facilities and ensure communication with families remains prioritised during this time. This, we pray, will reinforce provisions that are there to ultimately protect the lives of those we care for most.

We pray that the pandemic which has entered our Home and affected many other facilities across the State of Victoria, quickly comes to an end. Our thoughts remain with our residents who are in our facility under lock-down, those being treated in hospital, their families, the families who are dealing with the loss of their loved ones and all who are working tirelessly for the good of all people affected.

We remind all that St. Basil's NSW/ACT, SA and WA are all separate entities and not in anyway related to the facility in Victoria. By the grace of God, there are no COVID-19 infections in any of those facilities and the management and staff in those facilities are working hard, together with the Holy Archdiocese, to ensure the continued safety and health of their residents.

We continue to pray for all the elderly in Homes for the Aged across the nation currently affected by COVID-19 and for the health and wellbeing of all Australians during this pandemic.