



St Basil's Homes for the Aged in Victoria

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18 December 2020

Christmas COVID-19 safety guide for St Basil's Homes for the Aged Victoria

Dear Resident, family member, representative.

After a long and challenging year and as the holiday season is in sight, St Basil's Homes for the Aged Victoria has been looking closely at the different options for family connection and celebration over the Christmas and New Year period. As the COVID-19 Pandemic seems to be under control in Australia and restrictions are indeed easing, the safety of our residents continuous to remain at our utmost priority. For this reason and although St Basil's is now able to offer increased visitor access into the facility and can arrange with families for some residents to leave the facility to attend family functions, preventative measures remain in place and all those who visit must abide by these guidelines. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the pandemic is still with us.

Restricted Visitation guidelines

The guidelines have been set as directives to keep our elders, staff, and community safe. ALL visitors are to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Visits to the facility are encouraged to be pre-arranged by our online reservation system to allow St Basil's to arrange density requirements.

Please contact the facility for further details.

2. Visitation will be permitted between 10am and 5pm, 7 days a week.
3. There will be no time limit for length of visits. However, visitation is only permitted between 10am and 5pm for our staff to manage risk appropriately.
4. The facility will continue to follow a process of screening for all staff and visitors on entry. This will include temperature checks, signing of declaration forms and having hygiene and other infection control requirements explained to visitors prior to entry. Retaining this practice over Christmas will reduce the potential impact from exposure to a visitor who has influenza or Covid-19.
5. All visitors will be asked if they have had the flu vaccine in accordance with the Commonwealth Government requirement "*that after May 1 2020, only people who have had the flu vaccine will be permitted access to residential aged care facilities*".
6. Visitors are only permitted to go directly to the allocated visitor areas or the room of the resident they are visiting: they are not permitted to access communal areas of the facility and interact with other residents.
7. Visitors will not be able to sit in the main dining room at meal times.

8. Visitors who wish to attend at mealtimes must talk to the facility manager and arrange for the meal to take place away from the main dining room.
9. Visitors must ask facility staff well in advance if they have food of their own to share with their loved one. Infection controls and food safety laws may mean that we are likely to say no to most requests.
10. It is important that the density quotient set by the Department of Health is observed. The number of visitors permitted in a resident's room is subject to environmental safety standards.
11. Masks are to be always worn by staff and visitors. Children aged 12 and over should wear a mask (unless an exception applies). Children under 12 may wear a mask, children under 2 should not wear a mask.
12. Visitors must keep at least 1.5 metres away from everyone at the facility including the resident they are visiting. If this cannot be adhered to, for example when assisting with care delivery such as feeding assistance, then staff will direct you to wear personal protective equipment (PPE).
13. St Basil's will be holding Christmas parties and other non-denominational parties for our residents throughout the holiday period. These events will be limited this year to residents and staff only as we cannot allow external visitors to mingle freely with large groups of residents. For this reason ensure you book your visit around these events.
14. Residents can leave the facility with family provided a risk resident leaving facility completes a screening test and families fill out a COVID-19 Resident Leave Form. If you wish to arrange for a resident to leave the facility to attend a family event, you will need to provide advance notice to the facility manager.
15. The Department strongly discourages residents from attending crowded indoor venues such function centres, shopping centres, clubs, pubs, and restaurants or to a residential location with more than 30 people in attendance. It is also recommended that overnight stays outside the facility are avoided.
16. St Basil's reserves the right to impose infection control protocols, including Covid-19 testing and isolation of residents who may have travelled to locations that are identified at high risk or if showing any type of symptoms.
17. As per the Federal Government's recommendation all visitors are encouraged to download the Covid-19 Safe App on their phone.

Hopefully this update gives you enough information to start planning your Christmas calendar. Your local team will be in touch with any changes once we receive the official advice from VIC Health.

Please note that these guidelines are subject to change immediately if community transmission in at any time is recognised.

We look forward to seeing you in our facilities over the coming months and wish all of our families and consumers a safe and happy holiday period.

Yours Faithfully,
St Basil's Homes for the Aged in Victoria.