

19 June 2020

Dear Consumer

**An update to consumers receiving a Home Care Package or Home Support through our Alkira or ELMDS Centres.**

I trust this letter finds you safe and well. The past few months have been a very trying time for the community as a whole. It has been reassuring that government measures have slowed the spread of COVID-19, and although we are seeing some restrictions slowly being lifted, it is important that you continue to be vigilant over the coming weeks and months. There has been an increase in cases over the last couple of weeks particularly in Victoria, which is a reminder to us all that we are still in the midst of a pandemic.

Remember the best defence against all respiratory illnesses and COVID-19 is to practice excellent hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, maintain social distancing and stay at home and away from others if you are unwell or have any flu-like symptoms.

Anglican Care continues to take all possible steps to provide safe quality care to consumers and to support our employees with ongoing information and education on COVID-19. Our employees are skilled and well prepared. The wellbeing and safety of our consumers and employees is paramount and remains our priority.

**COVID-19 Pandemic plan**

Anglican Care has a documented Pandemic Plan and our COVID-19 Crisis Response Team meets each day or as required to respond to new information or directions and take the required action.

We would like to remind you to maintain your visitor register at home. This is vital to ensure the safety of you, our employees and your visitors. The register should be located at the front door to keep a record of people entering and leaving your home and the times. This is important for you and your visitors to enable Anglican Care or other health professionals to trace any potential exposure.

**Consumer Experience Survey**

By now you should have received a letter and a copy of the annual consumer and family experience survey. We encourage you to complete the survey and return using the pre-paid reply envelope. The survey results are collated independently and are strictly confidential. They assist us to identify where there are opportunities to improve, resulting in better service provision to you and to highlight what we are doing well.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) is also conducting a Consumer Experience Survey in June and July 2020. Commission officers will be telephoning around 5,000 consumers during that time.

If you have any questions about the surveys please speak with your care advisor or manager. You can also contact me directly on 02 4958 0087.

### **Alkira and ELMDS Centres**

As previously reported, there were restrictions on non-essential gatherings announced by the Prime Minister in March 2020 resulting in a direction from the Department of Health to suspend the social support and other group activities offered at Alkira and ELMDS. The allied health, diversional therapy, lifestyle and nursing staff have maintained contact with consumers, providing activities and developing programs to support consumers in their home. We have received some lovely feedback so far and we welcome any ideas you have or suggestions on how we can improve. The team will be contacting you soon to talk about some new virtual lifestyle and exercise programs using technology such as Zoom and FaceTime. They will ask you if you have access to an iPad or tablet or whether you may need assistance with accessing a device.

Anglican Care will continue to monitor advice from the Department of Health and keep you informed when it is safe to welcome consumers back to the centres. When this does occur it will be a gradual process.

In preparation, it is important for you to know there is currently restrictions on entry and visitors to aged care homes. From 1 May entry to residential care homes is restricted to people who have had a current influenza vaccination. While the flu vaccination cannot protect against COVID-19, you can become ill with the flu and COVID-19 together. To protect yourself and others, when the centres re-open all consumers, carers or family members visiting the centres will need to show proof of influenza vaccination.

### **Home Care Package Program**

The managers and care advisors are working closely with home care package consumers as they adapt to the changes related to COVID-19. Restrictions to transport and social centre attendance continue. A copy of the Department of health 'It's ok to have home care flyer' was sent out with our last correspondence. Our staff have received training in the latest infection control guidelines to ensure the safety of you and our workforce. Again a reminder even though you may be socially isolating please remember to contact your GP to discuss your flu vaccinations if you haven't already done so.

### **Taking leave from your home care package**

If you have elected to take leave from your package the subsidy paid to your package by the government may be reduced depending on the amount of leave taken. Your basic daily fee (client contribution) is still payable when taking hospital and social leave. There is provision for consumers experiencing financial difficulties to submit an application for financial hardship to Centrelink.

Below are the details of the impact on the subsidy when you take leave – you will see this impact in the income section of home care package statement.

Leave Type	Impact on Subsidy	Are my fees still payable when on leave?	
		Basic daily fee	Income tested fee
Hospital	Full home care subsidy paid for up to 28 consecutive days in a financial year. After 28 consecutive days the subsidy is only 25% of the subsidy rate	Yes	Yes
Transition Care		No	Yes
Residential respite	Full home care subsidy paid for up to 28 cumulative days in a financial year. After 28 cumulative days the subsidy is only 25% of the subsidy rate	No	Yes
Social leave (package suspended for any other reason)		Yes	Yes

Your leave balance resets each year on 1 July and if your package level changes at any time. If you change providers, your leave balance transfers with you. If you have any questions related to your contributions or home care package subsidy please speak with your care advisor or manager.

### Yes Chef

'Yes Chef' is an Anglican Care meal delivery service that provides fresh cooked meals for consumers in the Hunter region who attend one of our centres, receive a home care package or reside in one of our Retirement Living villages. We hope to expand this to our other regions in the future. The team was able to sample a selection of meals on offer and were impressed with the quality and presentation. The cost of the meals is very reasonable and this is a great option to ensure you are meeting your nutritional needs. If you are on a home care package the administration cost of the meal delivery service can be paid through your package. If you would like further information on the meal service please contact your Care Advisor. Our dietitians Nik and Kate will send out an information pack over the next week.

It is important for you to know that if you have any questions or concerns please contact your care advisor or manager or contact me directly on 4958 0087. I am always very happy to receive calls.

Kind regards



Chris Giles  
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### Community Office Contact Details

Hunter: (02) 4958 0088  
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