

23 March 2020

Dear Whānau/Family,

Most of you are aware of the global COVID-19 pandemic New Zealand is battling. Today, Jacinda Ardern has placed our country at Risk Level 3 with plans to advance to Level 4 (the highest level) Wednesday, the 25th of March. What this means is that non-essential workers are instructed to self-isolate. This isolation is expected to persist over the next four weeks. We understand that this may lead to increased **clientele** loneliness and separation anxiety, and we are allocating staff members to help set up video communication which is possible on most of today's cell-phones. This is the best method to keep in communication with your family member and achieve the government's requirement for social distancing. Social distancing and hand washing are the two most important things you can do to play your part in stamping out this pandemic. There is a government directive.

Please don't visit us, but keep in touch via phone or social media

Currently, we have no suspected COVID-19 cases among our clientele. We review Ministry of Health guidelines continuously and are frequently in contact with infectious disease experts who have been guiding us on best practices to limit exposure. We have reinforced the most stringent standards of cleanliness. Any ill staff will not be coming to work. We are arranging telehealth whenever possible although most of our services as a health care organization do require in person essential care. We continue to provide essential inpatient care. We are not accepting new patients with respiratory symptoms or fever and we are limiting outings to the community.

There is considerable effort to keep your loved ones safe, but we also need your help. As we start cancelling community outings, we ask for your support in standing with us and help explaining to your loved ones the need for such measures. Our clients are often at greater risk of infection than the general population, but sometimes it is difficult for them to realise this. We are doing our best to communicate to residents the current risks of traveling off-site, but you have the strongest connection with your loved ones. It would be a great help if you would likewise encourage your family members to avoid outings to the home or elsewhere until New Zealand's alert level has improved.

We are working in the best interests of your loved one

We understand this is a hard time for us all. We have dedicated staff working on this issue and focused on keeping your loved ones safe. Your support will be vital in achieving any form of success. Thank you for your time. We are available should you have further questions. In the first instance please review our website for updates. Will be in contact with any further major communications.

Best,

Tanya Harris & Chris Howard-Brown