

16 April 2020

Dear Whānau/Family,

Though it has been difficult, you have done an amazing job helping us protect your family. Thank you. We understand that breaks are meant to be spent with loved ones, but we continue to emphasize to your loved ones that this is something we must push through together to safeguard the future. With your help, we have managed to keep all ABI facilities COVID-19 free. We continue to strictly screen our staff and new admissions so that we can protect your family. We have even limited access to ABI by other medical support services. As a result, some of our usual staff have assisted with extra duties to deliver services in a safe environment.

We still need your help. While we are winning the COVID-19 pandemic, there are still people being infected in New Zealand on a daily basis. We have seen the catastrophe which can result when this deadly virus hits residential facilities in particular. In compromised patients, the virus spreads rapidly. Most of the deaths during this country's pandemic have taken place in one healthcare facility in Christchurch. We cannot risk putting your loved ones in similar danger. We continue to encourage them to contact you regularly via telephone and video-chat technology.

ABI recognizes this separation has been especially hard for you, the whānau/family. If you feel you have not had sufficient access to your family, PLEASE contact us so that we may facilitate a video call for you. Help us maintain our isolation safety standards. I know it is tempting to try to "sneak a peek" at your loved one, but this only places everyone at risk. This includes your loved one. We need you to continue being strong. Please share that strength with your family/our patients, and remind them that the quarantine measures will not last forever. Encourage them with frequent calls of support.

We are in constant communication with the DHB and Ministry of Health in efforts to stay abreast of any new medical facility recommendations. Once the national medical guidance regarding visits change, we will contact you within 24 hours. We anticipate the need to implement pre-visit nursing screens with temperature readings for family members. We have allocated the numbers below as points of contact for arranging visits. However, please note that ahead of any government changes in the pandemic level requirements, we are still unable to allow visitors onto ABI properties at this time. Once this changes, we will contact you.

Auckland Intensive: 029 294 4988

Auckland Residential: 021 653 056

Wellington Intensive & Residential: 021 195 5818

In the meanwhile, please be assured that we continue to emphasize to our patients how much you love them, and that the entire country is observing these restrictions. We are all in this together, and we will get through this together. He waka eke noa.

Best regards,



Dr Tanya Harris
National Medical Director



Dr Christine Howard-Brown
Chief Executive Officer