

## **GraniteHill Residential Aged Care**

Please see the Application for Visiting attached and process for application for visiting for GraniteHill Residential Aged Care which will commence from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

We need all parties that are seeking entry to complete and return the attached form and the current form has the terms and conditions for visiting so I need the documents to be completed and returned prior to visiting recommencing.

Below you will also see the terms and conditions of visiting in a Question and Answer format and visiting will continue even if we re-enter a COVID Outbreak situation unless the PHU mandates the cessation of all visiting.

Regards,

**Cherree Hunter,**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

### **Visiting Guidelines for GraniteHill and Euroa Bush Nursing Hospital in response to the Guidelines for the Pandemic (Victoria to Hospitals and Care Facilities) Order 2022 (No.2).**

#### **Why are the rules of visiting so stringent?**

We have adapted requirements from the Guidelines for the Pandemic (Victoria to Hospitals and Care Facilities) Order 2022 (No.2). released to the sector yesterday. Having residents isolated in their rooms is terrible and each time we have 3 cases (which is considered an outbreak) the GVH Public Health Unit (PHU) mandate our actions and place all staff in full PPE and isolate residents.

GraniteHill Management does not make any of the decisions about isolating residents, wearing PPE, or visiting the site once an outbreak or exposure site is called by the PHU. We also do not make the decision about what to do if a visitor tests positive at the time of entry on a RAT test as these decisions are made at a Statewide level. RAT testing is the only way out of this, to stop the virus at the point of entry to the facility. The only alternative to constant shut down is that 100% of residents become infected with the virus and in turn some of them will become unwell and may die as a result.

Please work with us in implementing these guidelines, we want you to come into the site and see your loved one. We also appreciate that these new routines of entry will be difficult to accept but please do not take out your frustrations on the staff. There are numerous "Have your Say" forms for you to complete around the site, please just fill one in and we will discuss your concerns with you.

#### **Personal Protective Equipment and Rapid Antigen testing**

The Omicron variant is highly contagious and we want to limit the possible risks to residents and staff. However, we fully appreciate the issues around sourcing Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) and PPE.

Our current program for all staff and contractors entering the facility are RAT tested on entry. These tests are expensive, and the service is supportive of providing them to you for use at the time of entry at cost price of \$15.00 Visitors are welcome to source their own tests and use them at the time of entry to the site.

The benefit of this model is that we will identify any individual as being positive at the time of entry limiting risk to the residents. Euroa Health Inc will absorb the costs of any PPE required including • Gowns • Face Shields • Surgical or N 95 Masks.

The cost of these items for the organisation is \$23 and they are single use items. To support safe usage of the PPE you will be provided with education on the usage of the PPE and Rapid Antigen Testing in the form of a short video, please watch this video and it will ensure that the risk of COVID entry into the site is limited.

Visitors **MUST** comply with the PPE usage during their visits or they will be asked to leave and ongoing visiting to the facility will be revoked. We appreciate wearing the PPE can be uncomfortable but it is required to limit the risk of spread of the virus.

### **Entry requirements and Attestation**

Visitors **MUST** provide us the detail of their vaccination status for our records and refusal to provide us with this information will result in refusal of entry.

Visitors **MUST** make a declaration at the time of each entry to the facility information to include

- That the individual is free of COVID related symptoms
- Negative RAT result on the same day
- Identify if they have been in contact with a confirmed case within 7 days if vaccinated or within 14 days if unvaccinated

Number of visitors

- No more than 2 visitors at any one time
- No More than 2 visitors per day

Residents or appointed Power of Attorney are to stipulate 2 members of the family to visit and notify the service who they are. Euroa Health will not be involved with the selection of visitor's families nor refereeing family disagreements about who are the appointed visitors.

**Visiting times (these are initial times we will expand visiting once the service is established and education to visitors is complete).**

Times for visiting are

- 12pm to 2pm Monday to Friday
- 4pm-6pm Monday to Friday

We have made the decision to include visiting over mealtimes as many families of residents that require meal assistance are keen to undertake that task, which will be undertaken in the residents' room.

### **Visiting duration**

Maximum visit is 2 hours

### **End of life visiting**

Defined as 28 days or less until death and will be

- 5 people at any one time
- No time limits apply

### **Agreement to Visit**

Euroa Health have developed a document that outlines the terms we need you to comply with to limit the risk of further outbreaks at the site. We ask that you carefully review the contents of that document and commit to complying with the requirements.

This is the only way we are going to be able to safely continue visiting whilst limiting the risk of spread to your loved ones or staff.

**Where can I visit?**

Only in the resident's room

**What happens if a non-appointed visitor arrives at the site for visiting?**

They will be turned away.

**Can I remove my mask to eat or drink during the visit?**

Absolutely not, should you need to eat or drink you will need to leave the facility to do so and upon return reapply the required PPE.

**Can I visit if I have symptoms but have a negative RAT test?**

No, you are not permitted to visit if you may have any symptoms at all.

**What do I do if I get sick or I am diagnosed with COVID after visiting?**

It is vital that you tell us if you are diagnosed with COVID less than 72 hours from your last visit. Please call the site immediately on 0498 032 951 as it is very likely that you were shedding the virus during your visit and we need to assess your loved one more closely.

**Can I touch my family member?**

If you are wearing the correct PPE you are welcome to touch and care for your loved one and assisting with meals or other simple tasks is highly recommended as residents really do miss that.

**Entry to the facility?**

We ask that you complete the required tasks on entry whilst maintaining social distancing of 1.5m, do not gather as a crowd around the front desk.

Tasks to enter each time

- How long will entry processes take? RAT test
- Attestation x 2
- PPE usage

Testing itself takes 15 mins whilst you are waiting for results you need to Donn your PPE and complete the 2 attestations then staff will check your results. You need to be prepared to incorporate this time into the 2 hours visiting timeframe

**Can I bring a RAT from home?**

Certainly, but it must be opened and done in front of staff at GraniteHill.

**How do I pay for the RAT tests?**

You can pay using cash or credit card each test will cost you \$15 which is the cost price of the item. You can only purchase one test at a time.

**What happens if GraniteHill stock supplies become critically low for RAT tests?**

Should supplies become critically low the kits on site, we will need to hold them for our staff and resident testing and should this become apparent visitors will need to source their own RATS tests for entry.

We attempt to keep at least 5 days of RAT stock at hand and should supplies at Euroa Health become less than 2 days we will ask visitors to source and supply their own RAT tests. Supply across the health sector is critically low and we need to ensure that we can test those that MUST enter the facility to deliver care in addition to unwell residents and patients.

**What happens if you test positive at the front door?**

Once this is identified reception staff will call the Euroa Health COVID phone which is carried by a Senior Registered Nurse. Several questions will need to be answered by the positive individual to ensure either safe entry or returning home for isolation for 7 days.

**If you are Double Vaccinated**

Should you provide evidence of COVID infection greater than 7 days prior (Positive PCR or other form of evidence) you will be able to enter the building as normal but will still be required to wear the required PPE. Should you not be able to provide evidence of the date at which you become positive you will not be allowed entry for 7 days. If you are unable to show us the day you were infected which we call day Zero you will not be permitted entry for 7 days as it is the first 7 days of infection that you are most likely to transfer the virus of you are fully vaccinated.

**If you are not vaccinated or have only had one dose**

Should you provide evidence of COVID infection greater than 14 days prior (a positive PCR or other form of evidence) you will be able to enter the building as normal but will still be required to wear the required PPE. Should you not be able to provide evidence of the date at which you become positive you will not be allowed entry for 14 days.

If you are unable to show us the day you were infected which we call day Zero you will not be permitted entry for 14 days as it is the first 14 days of infection that you are most likely to transfer the virus of you are not vaccinated or have had only one dose of the vaccine.

**I want to visit my loved one but not enter the facility?**

GraniteHill residents can use ICT systems to facilitate visiting such as Facetime. Window visiting may be an option if you are unwilling to comply with entry requirements, please let us know and we will discuss your individual needs.

For all other enquiries, please contact reception on (03) 5795 0200.