



Statement from Ms Janet Anderson PSM, Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner

COVID-19 Outbreaks in Victorian Aged Care Services

Thursday 16 July 2020

“As the national regulator of Commonwealth funded aged care services, the Commission’s role is to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of older Australians receiving aged care.

The recent COVID-19 outbreaks at residential aged care services in Victoria have understandably brought great anxiety to residents, family members and staff. They serve as a reminder of the elevated risks facing aged care services during the pandemic, and reinforce the need for everyone in the aged care sector to remain alert and ready.

The Commission is closely monitoring the situation in Victoria and we are fully exercising our regulatory authority to mitigate the risk to residents and staff at services experiencing an outbreak. We are using our powers to ensure that providers meet their obligations with respect to the Aged Care Quality Standards, and to implement all necessary steps to mitigate the risks of transmission of the virus consistent with the advice of health authorities. The thoroughness of an aged care provider’s advance planning to prepare for a possible outbreak is fundamental to the effectiveness of their response.

We are also working together with the Commonwealth Department of Health and the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, including infectious disease and clinical experts, to closely support services experiencing an outbreak in Victoria. The Commonwealth and Victorian governments have jointly ensured that additional clinical expertise is rapidly deployed to impacted services along with additional staffing as required. Arrangements are also in place to undertake urgent COVID-19 testing of individuals residing in or working at a service with an outbreak, and to provide supplies of personal protective equipment from the national medical stockpile.

The Commission is undertaking additional targeted activities to monitor and support all aged care services in Victoria in response to the increased risks of a COVID-19 outbreak. More details about these activities can be found on our website [here](#).

If there are concerns about the care of residents or the actions of specific services in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, complaints can be made via the Commission’s website: www.agedcarequality.gov.au or by calling **1800 951 822**.”