

## Media release: COVID-19 response by Froniditha Care

18 March 2020

Froniditha Care, the largest aged care provider for Greek Australians, is implementing emergency measures to ensure the health and safety of its elderly residents, consumers and staff against the spread of COVID-19

The organisation cares for more than 450 residents in its five nursing homes and over 350 people in the community, with more than 650 staff directly or indirectly involved in their care.

By Thursday 19 March 2020, the organisation's six Social Support Groups will have been suspended for two weeks until staff can be properly briefed and trained in new screening measures.

The groups provide vital social support for isolated elderly people which is why the organisation is keen to keep the program running during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Visitors to the residential facilities have been severely restricted to just two people per resident a day.

Chief Executive Officer Michael Malakonias says the organisation has been quick to enforce these measures even before official advice has been updated.

"It's imperative to keep our consumers and staff safe, even if our measures seem extreme," he said.

"We ordered more masks and cleaning products since December 2019 in preparation and have updated our infectious control policy."

New measures also include rostering extra cleaning shifts and implementing flexible working conditions for staff.

A more comprehensive list of changes include:

Residential facilities:

1. Essential visits only from family members  
*Note: As of Tuesday 17 March, immediate family members of residents will be allowed to enter between scheduled times and must present to reception before entering.  
No children or volunteers will be allowed to visit.*
2. All resident bus trips, excursions and incursions have been cancelled
3. Extra cleaning shifts have been added to all facilities
4. All social leave and non-urgent outpatient appointments will be cancelled for residents
5. Cancellation of all student placements

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Patron: Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria

## Community Services

1. Social Support Groups suspended until 4 April 2020.
2. The Community Visitation Scheme has been suspended and no volunteer visits until further notice
3. Home Care Package clients have been contacted and will receive only essential services for at least four weeks (essential services decided by the clients)
  - Non-essential services include: gardening, transport to clubs etc

## Staff:

1. Social distancing and extra hand hygiene measures are already in effect
2. Staff must not work at multiple facility locations
3. Mulgrave Support Hub staff will trial working from home from Thursday 19 March 2020
4. Personal Care Workers have attended an extraordinary meeting to be informed of procedures implemented to protect them and the consumers they service.

Froniditha Care senior management and the Board of Directors review the measures daily and respond accordingly.

Family members and staff are updated regularly by management also.

These measures are expected to change at any time, with Froniditha Care following advice from, WHO, DHHS, Federal and State Governments, the Chief Medical Officer and industry peak bodies ACSA & LASA.

For the most up to date information, please visit <https://fronidithacare.org.au/media-releases-announcements/>

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