

memo

memo no: 782
to: All Lifebridge Staff and Volunteers
from: Bronwyn Mitchell
date: 3 April 2020
subject: COVID-19 – Fair Work Commission – Job Keeper Scheme Update

Dear Lifebridge Staff and Volunteers,

As we move into another quiet weekend, we take this opportunity to provide the following information and reminders for the week ending 3rd April 2020.

General Update

- We are pleased to confirm that as of this afternoon there are no reported or confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst our staff, customer and/or carer population. Where staff or customers have been tested, all have returned negative results. Please note that many Lifebridge staff and volunteers have elected to self-isolate for personal or family reasons or because they fall into a high-risk category.
- We remind staff and volunteers of their responsibility to adhere to all social distancing and hygiene protocols over the weekend. Please keep yourself, your family and your community safe during this period. Maintaining appropriate hygiene and social distancing practices will increase our chances of preventing exposure and infection in the community and in turn enable us to provide much needed supports to our aged and disability customers on an ongoing basis.
- Lifebridge have secured and continue to make available personal protective equipment and product to be used in the provision of supports for the protection of our customers, co-workers and families. PPE and products including gloves, face masks, waterproof booties, hand sanitiser, disinfectant and hand towels are available at our Kingscliff offices, Monday – Friday 8.30am – 3.30pm. Wherever possible, please bring your own dispensers to be refilled from the bulk products we have sourced.
- The Lifebridge Executive remain in constant contact with government departments, peak bodies and agencies to ensure we are up to date on all legislative changes and relief packages being made available. The following is a quick summary of two key initiatives we are keeping a close eye on:

Fair Work Commission

The Fair Work Commission is conducting a hearing on the 6th April, 2020 to review submissions for the introduction of new temporary clauses to be included in 103 Modern Awards. There are two key amendments under consideration, likely to come into effect 8th April – 30 June 2020.

1. Annual Leave can be taken as half pay ie. can take twice as much leave at ½ pay.
2. Two weeks unpaid Pandemic Leave.

Please be advised that Lifebridge has already implemented the above initiatives enabling staff to self-isolate upon request accessing all or part of their accrued annual leave or LWOP.

Job Keeper Scheme

The Government is introducing a subsidy program to support employees and businesses.

The Job Keeper Payment is designed to help businesses affected by the Coronavirus to cover the costs of their employees' wages, so that more employees can retain their job and continue to earn an income. Please see attached the latest **Job Keeper Fact Sheet** which outlines how this scheme will work, eligibility criteria and likely timeframe for implementation.

Please note that Lifebridge has registered with the ATO and is currently awaiting further advice to determine eligibility for the scheme.

NDIS News – Changes to NDIS Price Guide – COVID-19 Response

For your information please find attached a Fact Sheet that is being emailed to NDIS customers this afternoon. The document provides an update on recent changes to the NDIS price guide in response to COVID-19, effective 25th March 2020.

Customer Feedback

The Lifebridge Executive Team and Board would once again like to express our immense gratitude for the exceptional professionalism, respect, consideration, empathy and support being delivered to our customers during this difficult and often frightening time.

Lifebridge have received numerous emails, phone calls and comments from customers and carers expressing their deep-felt thanks and appreciation to all staff. Some of the comments include:

“We would be lost without Lifebridge”

“We are extremely thankful and consider you our essential service”

“Thank you for taking the time to call, it is so nice to be thought of and cared for during this time”

“Thank you for providing me service and not deserting us”

“Lifebridge staff are doing a wonderful job”

A friendly reminder to continue monitoring your Lifebridge email address in the event of any significant changes that need to be implemented to services next week.

Wishing you all good health and wellbeing over the weekend. Continue to stay safe and please take time to enjoy some peacefulness, maintain positive thoughts and continue to be kind to yourself and others.

Regards,



Bronwyn Mitchell
Chief Executive Officer