

memo

memo no: 839
to: All Lifebridge Staff and Volunteers
from: Bronwyn Mitchell, CEO
date: 5 January 2022
subject: High Priority Covid-19 Response Update

To all Lifebridge Staff and Volunteers,

Happy New Year and I hope you enjoyed time with family and friends over the festive season. To staff who worked through, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation as I know how hectic things were during this period.

As anticipated, Lifebridge is experiencing an increase in COVID-19 infections and related symptoms amongst staff, volunteers and customers. Our concern and well wishes are offered to the Lifebridge community who are feeling sick and anxious during this time. I take this opportunity to remind staff to seek medical attention if you are concerned and encourage you to contact EAPAssist on 0407 086 000 if this may be of benefit.

Our primary objectives continue to be the health and safety of our staff, customers and families and the delivery of supports and services to our customers. To this end it is important that you take the time to read, understand and adhere to the advice detailed below.

Health & Hygiene Protocols

1. Prior to service you **must** ask each customer the following questions:
 - a. Are you feeling unwell?
 - b. Have you tested positive to COVID-19 or are you waiting on test results?
 - c. Have you been in contact with anyone who is waiting for a COVID-19 test result?
 - d. Have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive to COVID-19?

If they answer “yes” to any of these questions they are to remain at home and you are to contact Beverly Smallmon immediately. In home service is to continue if you have the appropriate PPE and it is safe to do so.

2. Masks **must** be worn when indoors, during customer transport and when 1.5 meters social distancing cannot be maintained. If during service you become aware of a customer with symptoms, that customer **must** be isolated from others and arrangements made for COVID-19 testing.
3. All staff **must** maintain rigorous hygiene practices including:
 - Regular hand washing,
 - Use of hand sanitizers,
 - Regularly wiping down work areas, vehicles, desks, contact areas with disinfectant wipes and/or sprays,
 - Monitor for symptoms and not attend work if you are feeling unwell.

6. All office based staff **must** continue to work from home wherever possible and use the booking sheet on Teams if they need attend the office. All staff, volunteers and visitors **must** sign in and out at Reception or the Cottage. Masks **must** be worn in the Office and Cottage at all times.
7. As we experience high levels of unplanned staff leave and customer cancellations we anticipate short notice changes to rosters. All staff are asked to regularly refresh and review their VisiCase roster for changes to shifts, times and service types. We appreciate staff flexibility in delivering service across NDIS, HCP and CHSP funding streams in line with their training and experience. It may be the case that essential services are prioritised and groups altered due to staff and customer availability.

COVID-19 Related Isolation Periods and Return to Work Requirements

8. If you are feeling unwell with cold or flu like symptoms you **must** remain at home, get tested and not return to work until you receive a negative test result and you are no longer experiencing symptoms.
9. If you are deemed a **Close Contact*** of a COVID-19 positive case you **must**:
 - Contact Beverly Smallmon immediately.
 - Self-isolate for 7 days (from last contact with covid positive person) and get a PCR test.
 - Do a RAT test on Day 6. If both tests are negative you can leave isolation on day 7. **HOWEVER** –
 - You will be unable to return to the workplace for a further 7 days as Aged Care and Disability Service providers are considered a “high risk setting”.
 - Complete a RAT and provide evidence of a negative result prior to returning to the workplace.
- * You are deemed to be a Close Contact if a member of your household tests positive to COVID-19 or you have spent an extended period of time with a person who has tested positive to COVID-19 with consideration given to other risk mitigation factors like mask wearing, social distancing and indoor/outdoor environment.
10. If you **test positive for COVID-19** you **must**:
 - Contact Beverly Smallmon immediately.
 - Self-isolate for 7 days (from the date you got tested).
 - You may leave isolation after 7 days if you are symptom free (ie. no running nose, sore throat, cough or shortness of breath). **HOWEVER** –
 - You will be unable to return to the workplace for a further 3 days as Aged Care and Disability Service providers are considered a “high risk setting”.
 - Complete a RAT and provide evidence of a negative result prior to returning to the workplace.
11. If you receive a notification from a QR code contact tracing service you must:
 - Follow instructions provided in either the text message or over the phone contact.
 - In most instances this notification is of a possible **casual contact** and does not require self-isolation or testing. Rather you must monitor for symptoms and act if you begin to feel unwell.
 - Contact Beverly Smallmon if you require advice.

Please remember that the situation is constantly evolving. Lifebridge will endeavor to keep you informed but you are equally responsible for keeping yourself educated on COVID related protocols and responses.

Please continue to monitor your emails and contact your departmental manager if you have any questions or concerns regarding the above.

For further reference please see attached to this email –

1. Updated Pol/HRM 08 – Infection Control - Addendum 3
2. NSW Department of Health Fact Sheet – Testing Positive to Covid-19 (1.1.22)
3. NSW Department of Health Fact Sheet – Information for People Exposed to Covid-19 (1.1.22)

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B. Mitchell".

Bronwyn Mitchell
CEO