

Village to ease Level Two lock-down

DETAILS SUBJECT TO CHANGE IF OFFICIAL ADVICE CHANGES OR IS UPDATED

Kerikeri Retirement Village will ease restrictions on visitor access to its Care Facility from 6am on Tuesday 25 August, chief executive Hilary Sumpter said today. Each of its 66 Care Facility residents will be allowed two nominated visitors. Either of these visitors (but not both) will be able to visit once a day, Monday to Friday. Each visit will have to be pre-arranged with the Village by whoever holds the resident's Enduring Power of Attorney.

Visitors will need to stay in the rooms of the people they are visiting and will be asked to observe physical distancing etiquette. The Village will be guided by the Ministry of Health about the nature and extent of physical contact that will be allowed between visitors and their loved ones.

Visits will be limited to 30 minutes on an allocated schedule to avoid crowding, with the aim of having no more than 10 visitors in the facility at any one time. Visitors will be asked to wear masks, which they will need to bring with them.

People will be asked to give an affirmation of good health and to provide details for contact tracing, and their temperatures will be taken. They will be asked to sanitise their hands before and after their visits. Visitors will have to bring their own masks and any other items of personal protective equipment they wish to wear.

"We're aware that these restrictions sound draconian but they are the conditions specified by the NZ Aged Care Association and they're in place for the protection of the lovely people who call our Care Facility home," Ms Sumpter said.

Ms Sumpter said visitor numbers needed to be restricted to reduce the likelihood of contamination in the Care Facility.

The Village will maintain its policy of not allowing 'window visiting' in an effort to keep the general flow of people in and out of its premises as low as possible. People congregating around the Village increases the likelihood of cross-contamination, a risk the Village aims to minimise.

"We haven't beaten this thing yet," Ms Sumpter said. "The Prime Minister and Director-General of Health are crystal clear on this point - it's a tricky virus and it's still out there. And rest homes have proven to be particularly vulnerable. So we make absolutely no apologies for continuing to exercise a very high degree of caution for the safety of our residents."

Ms Sumpter said the Village had enjoyed support for its access policies from families of those in the Care Facility and understanding from those living in the Village. She encouraged families to continue using email, phone calls and video-call services to maintain contact with their loved ones in the Care Facility.

Care Facility residents will be allowed once again to walk around the Village grounds and take part in dedicated, vehicle-bound outings. Village Support staff and healthy volunteers under the age of 70 will once again have access to the Care Facility but will need to observe a heightened sanitisation protocol.

Distancing and sanitising procedures will be in place for the Village's independent living residents wishing to speak with staff in the reception and administration area.

There will continue to be no organised events or activities at the Village, and services such as podiatry, the Day Care programme and wellness activities will remain suspended for this week. The hairdresser will continue to see customers from the Care Facility on different days to those living elsewhere in the Village. She will also be unable to accept appointments with people from outside the Village.

Ms Sumpter thanked Village residents, and their families and loved ones, for the patience, co-operation and restraint they had shown during the more severe lockdown regime applied to aged care facilities during this recent period. She also praised Village staff for the "superb" way in which they are handling the pressures and difficulties created by the COVID-19 pandemic.