

From our family to yours

A Royal Freemasons community update

From the CEO



Kerri Rivett
Chief Executive Officer

What an extraordinary year 2020 has been so far and, while we're not ready to turn the page quite yet, I am so pleased to see our teams continuing to perform exceptionally well under incredible pressure. Pressure that has seen this sector scrutinised and politicised in the media, forcing outrage, concern and backlash across Victoria. Despite all of this, our team remains strong and dedicated to caring for your loved ones.

After several weeks of stringent restrictions, Gregory Lodge in Flemington is thrilled to welcome residents back home after receiving treatment in hospital. We have also had some extraordinary stories of survival, such as 98-year-old Honorata, who we are delighted to say is doing well.

We have seen a number of our homes enter precautionary lockdown measures, including Bendigo, Bacchus Marsh, Benalla and Footscray. I am pleased to advise that each of those homes has now been cleared and will return to COVID-normal operations, whilst still being carefully monitored.

Most recently, we received a notification that a staff member at Coppin Centre in Melbourne has tested positive for coronavirus. While we understand that this may be concerning and distressing news for the families of our residents at this home, we are doing everything possible to keep the people we love and care for healthy and safe.

In more promising news, I am pleased to announce that in coming days we will reintroduce window visits at some of our regional homes. We understand the importance and benefits that a face-to-face interaction can have for our families and residents. This was emphasised in our first Family Zoom Meeting, which took place recently.

The Bendigo family meeting was a constructive 1-hour discussion between members of our Executive, Facility Management and families. We discussed a variety of topics, the majority of which were requested by family members upon registration. Please keep an eye out for your home's allocated meeting time in their monthly **Linking** newsletter.

Thank you once again to our staff for the outstanding job they do every single day to ensure the highest level of care to our most vulnerable Victorians. Thank you to you also, for your overwhelming support, understanding and concern you have shown throughout this incredible period.

From the Chief Operations Officer

COVID-19 Plans

This month we have welcomed into our homes various specialist infection control and outbreak management specialists as well as visits from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to review our plans and processes in relation to COVID-19. While we have learned some tips along the way the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and each of our homes should be rightly proud of their efforts in protecting our communities. August has been the month of infection control with detailed education for all staff and the development of an infection control champion for each home.

Newsletters and Family Meetings

COVID-19 has presented some challenges in communications and we are very happy to have commenced family meetings for each home via Zoom. The homes are working with our marketing team to prepare monthly newsletters with all the news of residents, staff and activities within each home as well as sharing how the home is performing in areas such as wound care, falls and medication incidents. The times and links for family meetings will be within the newsletters which will be sent by email. We are looking forward to seeing you all at these meetings.

Pharmacy and Medication Management

Half of our residential homes have moved across to our new pharmacy provider, Quality Pharmacy. This has been coupled with the introduction of electronic medication management. A few teething hiccups but overall we have seen a reduction in errors related to pharmacy packing and staff missing signatures. The medication reviews for individual residents have assisted GP's with streamlining and reducing resident medications. A great result and we are looking forward to our regional homes joining this change when stage 4 restrictions have eased and our implementation team can travel.

Covid-19 Update

During August, we have put in place our outbreak management process at Benalla, Bacchus Marsh, Bendigo and Footscray. All these homes have now been cleared by the department with no resident cases of COVID-19. Gregory Lodge is celebrating 2 weeks of no new cases among staff or residents and we have welcomed a number of residents home from hospital. Coppin Centre has implemented their outbreak plan in response to a staff infection.

Hospitality

We have introduced Michael Ostroburski and Emma Belden to support the homes in delivering an amazing dining experience, reinforce our food safety program and commence our new menu development. Michael and Emma are looking forward to working with residents and the kitchen teams to test and taste to build the new menus.

From the Chief Information Officer

We continue to make exciting progressions in the upgrading of our WiFi network across our homes. To date, two of our homes have been successfully upgraded, with another five remaining. Unfortunately, this operation has been hindered somewhat due to the pandemic and stage 4 restrictions, however I am confident that these improvements will significantly improve residents' security in the not-so-distant future.

Additionally, we also continue to work on a LAN network upgrade, which will improve phone reliability and a promising new SD-WAN network, which will allow residents to access new streaming services such as Netflix. I am incredibly excited to see the successful rollouts of these networks.

From the Acting Chief Financial Officer

The 2020/21 Financial Year is now underway and our operating performance is being challenged as a result of this pandemic.

Additionally, the organisation continues to be under significant financial strain due to this government's ongoing cuts to aged care funding. This is not only a Royal Freemasons issue, it is a sector-wide concern, which has been raised with the government on multiple occasions. Currently, this government has made no promises for further funding other than that required to meet some costs associated with COVID-19.

The Finance team will be working closely with Facility Managers over the course of the financial year to ensure budget performance is achieved.

The TechnologyOne financial system is scheduled to be upgraded in early September 2020.

Scoping work is also underway to implement TechnologyOne's procurement module across the business to better manage and control the purchase of goods and services.

Home Care - Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

Royal Freemasons is an approved provider of the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP).

This program provides care to older people at home who are either not quite ready for or waiting for a home care package. The program is funded so the only cost is a small client contribution of between \$8-\$12. The CHSP is designed to enable you to take control, live and enjoy the independent life you choose. If you or a family member are living at home and need a little assistance with daily tasks or with staying connected within your community, the CHSP can provide some help before a higher level of care is needed.

You may be recovering from an illness or operation where you need extra support. We have a range of aged care services to help you at home, plus personalised health services and wellness programs. We will work with you to help manage your day-to-day requirements and we are here to offer an extra helping hand.

We have many ways that we can help you, and the range of services include:

- Personal care
- Domestic assistance
- Flexible respite
- Nursing
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Telehealth

The CHSP services are offered in different areas throughout Melbourne, so if you would like to know if you are eligible for this program and the types of services that we can offer, please call our friendly team on 1800 756 091 for more information.

[Download our CHSP brochure for more!](#)

Retirement Living

The Retirement living team have put their technology skills to work keeping in touch with residents across the villages with 226 wellness calls made to check in and see what help might be needed and have connected residents to help through the Commonwealth Home Support Program. The restaurant kitchen at Streeton Park has pumped out 1200 delicious meals which have been delivered to residents across our retirement living villages.

Berwick Brae residents Liz and Ann have been very busy during quarantine, sewing over 270 masks for fellow residents.

Together they have raised a total of \$1356 for both the craft and social clubs.

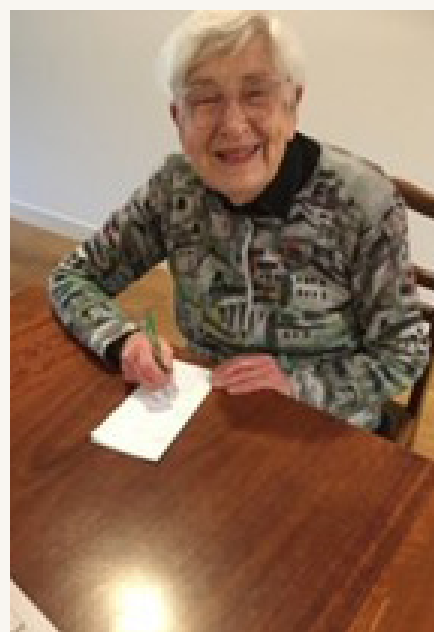
Some Streeton Park residents are writing pen pal letters to the residents of Centennial Lodge in the hope to bring cheer with some kind words and stories.

We will be delighted if the initiative takes off and many other Retirement Living facilities can join us in bringing some joy to the Aged Care residents.

Once this pandemic is over, we will join the pen pals together for a lovely afternoon tea.

(right)
Lorraine Smith, writing a letter.

(far right)
Jeanette Carrazza with the assistance of Charlie Brown writing her letter to the residents of Centennial Lodge.



A Royal Freemasons community update

Our residents at Bendigo are delighted to be using communal areas again after almost 3 weeks of precautionary outbreak measures. Well done to everyone at Royal Freemasons Bendigo on the fantastic work during this challenging time!



We are so overwhelmed with all the support and love received from families during this challenging time. Many of our facilities have received generous gifts and wishes which is greatly appreciated by all our staff that work so hard to deliver the best care to our residents.



After several weeks of sad and challenging circumstances, our team at Gregory Lodge are delighted to see 98-year-old Honorata become one of our strongest COVID-19 survivors. There's definitely a glowing smile underneath that mask!

Resident Activities

Spring flower display at Mount Martha Valley beautifully created by their craft group!



Elizabeth Gardens Choir group, fun art projects and moveable planter box!



Dress ups at Sale



The 'Message to My Loved One' letters you are emailing us continue to keep our residents' spirits high. They are very well received and we encourage you to continue sending them through.



Hallway sitting exercises facilitated by lifestyle staff and isolated art activities at Gregory Lodge!



Stay Informed

We continue to update our followers on what's been happening at our facilities daily via our Facebook page. With plenty of lifestyle activities and fun continuing indoors, we'll be uploading as much content as possible to keep you informed. To stay up to date, [Like us on Facebook!](#)

