



**PRESS RELEASE**

**11 April 2020**

**Aged Care Association renews call for COVID-19 testing for all new resident admissions**

The New Zealand Aged Care Association (NZACA) has today renewed its call again for all new residents to be tested for COVID19 before admission to a rest home, whether from hospital or the community, and if positive they will not be admitted.

Association Chief Executive Simon Wallace says the tragic deaths of two former residents of Rosewood Rest Home, after being transferred to Burwood Hospital, shows the vulnerability of our residents when exposed to COVID-19.

The Association is also calling for all front-line aged care workers, whether symptomatic or not, to be tested.

On April 7, Australia's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Brendan Murphy said that while testing resources are globally finite, resources should be applied where they are of the greatest use like aged care facilities (Source, Financial Review).

"We know from international experience that COVID-19 afflicts older people more than any other cohort. We are now seeing the tragic consequence of not having a comprehensive testing regime for residents and their carers," says Mr Wallace.

"We all know that the ideal situation is to exist in bubbles of just 2 or 3 people, but aged care facilities represent more than 600 very large clusters of the most vulnerable people in New Zealand, and they deserve to be protected. It is a tragedy waiting to happen.

"Our members' top priority is to protect the health and wellbeing of their staff and residents and testing new residents prior to admission is an important part of the wider protocols they have in place."

**ENDS**

For more information

Contact:

Simon Wallace, Chief Executive New Zealand Aged Care Association 0274 882 850