

NZACA advice to rest homes on COVID-19 Alert Levels 3 and 4

COVID-19 testing

Prior to admission or re-entry into ARC from hospital, a resident must return a negative test result.

Screening

The [Screening Form](#) should be completed up to 2-days before admissions and provided to the rest home.

A minimum of daily vital signs monitoring.

Ongoing screening for COVID-19 signs and symptoms.

Regular health screening of staff and visitors is advised.

7-day Isolation

Maintain a minimum of 7-day isolation for new admissions and re-admissions (after an overnight hospital stay).

Outpatient Appointments

There is not a requirement to put a resident into isolation following an outpatient appointment. It is advised that residents and staff wear medical masks at appointments.

7-days isolation is advised if there are risks identified that must be mitigated. For example, if a resident is exposed to risks in an Emergency Department in a hospital.

PPE

While on shift, all staff should wear a medical mask at all times.

Wearing of masks should be supported by hand hygiene.

For COVID-19 confirmed or probable cases full PPE to be worn, including N95 masks and face visors.

Discontinue any aerosol generating procedures where possible (e.g. nebulisers).

Staffing

Staff should be tested if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 and not work until they have a test result and are symptom free for 48-hours.

Staff should not work if a member of their household has symptoms until that person has a negative test.

Where a household contact of a staff member has been at a location of interest, the staff member should not work until their household contact has returned a negative test and the staff member has been fully vaccinated.

Staff should work in one facility only and not move between facilities.

Restrict staff movement between zones in the facility.

It is advisable that staff remove their footwear before entering their place of residence, remove work clothing/uniform and shower immediately to mitigate any risk of transmission alongside the usual infection control precautions of handwashing and maintaining physical distancing.

Visiting

Visitors are not allowed. Facilities must arrange for alternative methods of communication so that families can keep in touch with their whānau and friends.

Exceptions can be made on palliative grounds for end of life residents.

For more information, refer to the [Ministry of Health COVID-19 guidance for aged care providers](#).

Rhonda Sherriff, NZACA Clinical Advisor, is available for members to seek clinical advice between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) on 0800 445 200 or helpline@nzaca.org.nz.