COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities

National snapshot

Table 1: Aged Care COVID-19 data as at 0800 on 23 October 2020

Active outbreaks	15[1]
Active resident cases	1
Active staff cases	4
Deaths	676
Total number of residential aged care facilities that have had an outbreak	216
Total number of outbreaks at residential aged care facilities	221
Number of residential aged care facilities with resolved outbreaks	201 (206 outbreaks closed)[2]
Number of residential aged care facilities with only one case (resident or staff member) of COVID-19	95
Total resident cases	2027[3]
Resolved resident cases	1350
Total staff cases	2229[2]
Resolved staff cases	2225

[1] Some facilities have active outbreaks but do not have any active cases. These facilities are in a period of enhanced surveillance, which typically lasts 14 days.
[2] Some residential aged care facilities have had more than one outbreak. This means the number of resolved outbreaks exceeds the number of facilities that have been resolved.
[3] Total case numbers may increase/decrease without a change to active case numbers when historical records are reclassified or added.

Analysis

Current situation in Australia

In Australia, a total of 27,466 cases of COVID-19 have been reported, including 220 active cases and 905 deaths.
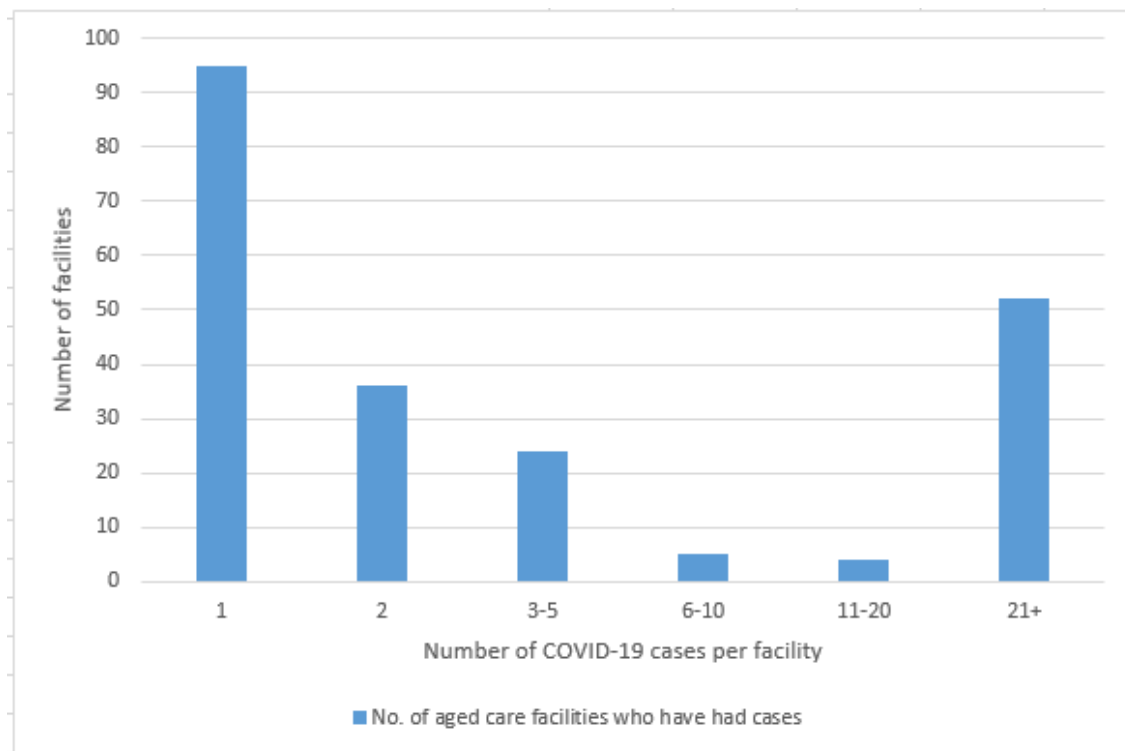
- Of these, a total of 20,329 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Victoria, including 105 active cases and 817 deaths.

There are 15 residential aged care facilities currently with active COVID-19 cases. All facilities are in Victoria.

Of the 15 residential aged care facilities with active COVID-19 outbreaks, 11 facilities have no actives cases. The outbreaks at facilities with no active cases remain classified as 'active' for a period of enhanced surveillance, which typically lasts for around 14 days. The classification of an outbreak is changed to 'resolved' at the discretion of the Public Health Unit.
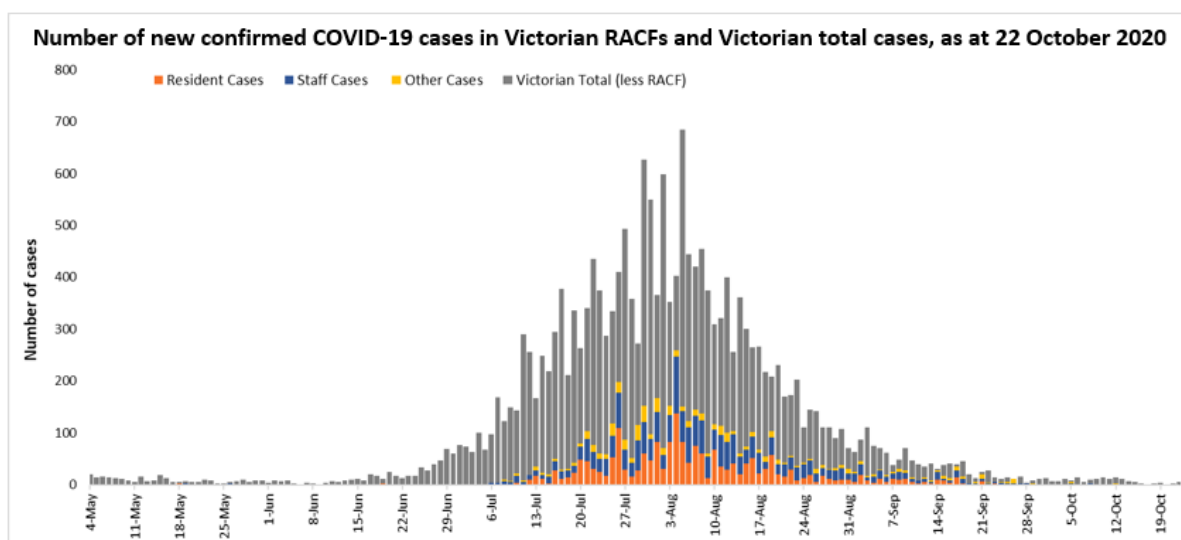
There has been no new active aged care resident cases since 28 September 2020.

Figure 1: Distribution of Australian residential aged care facilities by total number of cases of COVID-19 (includes staff and resident cases)

Of the 216 residential aged care facilities that have had a case(s) of COVID-19, 95 facilities (44 per cent) have had a single case of COVID-19.

Figure 2: Comparison of aged care transmission with community transmission in Victoria

Number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases in Victorian RACFs and Victorian total cases, as at 22 October 2020

Source: Victorian Aged Care Response Centre (VACRC)

Noting that 'other' refers to individuals associated with an outbreak in aged care who are neither residents nor staff. This category is not reported on in this report.

National comparison of 2020 residential aged care deaths with previous year and influenza comparisons

Across the 2020 calendar year to 31 July, the total number of people who have passed away in residential aged care is 32,398. The lower number of deaths in 2020 in the data available to date (32,398) compared to the same point in 2019 (33,383) is likely the result of increased influenza immunisation rates, and increased infection control protocols introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sadly influenza kills many elderly Australians each year many of whom live in aged care facilities.

Influenza is an important issue in residential care. Residents, particularly the elderly, are often vulnerable to influenza due to co-morbidities and/or advanced age, and the environment of communal living facilitates the spread of respiratory agents[4].

Notification data for influenza by accommodation setting is not reported to the National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (NNDSS).

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[4] Reference: Guidelines for the Prevention, Control and Public Health Management of Influenza Outbreaks in Residential Care Facilities in Australia

The following data represents persons aged 65 and over for all accommodation settings. In the period 1 January to 21 October for each year[5,6]

- The 2017 influenza season recorded the highest levels of influenza activity since 2009 swine flu pandemic with over 1,039 older Australians dying from influenza.
- In 2018, 78 older Australians died from influenza.
- In 2019, 828 older Australians died from influenza.
- In 2020, 28 older Australians have died from influenza.

International comparisons

During the COVID-19 pandemic, no country has been able to avoid outbreaks or deaths in residential aged care when there has been widespread community transmission.

The Australian death rate is 0.37 per cent (3.7 in 1,000) against the total number of residential aged care beds across the country, and predominantly limited to recent tragic events in Victoria.

As at 21 October 2020, Canada has experienced 9,811 deaths from COVID-19, with 7,597 (or 78 per cent) of these in care homes.

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[5] The data provided were extracted from the NNDSS on 22 October 2020. Due to the dynamic nature of the NNDSS, data in this extract is subject to retrospective revision and may vary from data reported in published NNDSS reports and reports of notification data by states and territories.
[6] The number of influenza-associated deaths reported to the NNDSS does not represent the true mortality associated with this disease. Reporting of an outcome of infection is not a requirement of notification and comparisons may not be reliable due to difference in methodologies between jurisdictions over time.

Workforce in active residential aged care outbreaks

As part of the aged care response, significant surge workforce assistance has been provided including by both State and National Aged Care Emergency Response (NACER) teams, with many workers deployed from interstate. The number of Commonwealth funded surge staff that have been deployed to Victorian aged care services exceeds 1,000.

Table 2: Workforce resources supplied to residential aged care facilities

Agency	Resources Supplied (as at 18 October 2020)
State and NACER (National Aged Care Emergency Response) Teams	Tasmanian Government: 7 clinical and 2 support staff. Western Australian Government: 19 clinical personnel and 4 support staff. South Australian Government: 18 clinical personnel and 4 support staff. 12 NACER teams (70 personnel) have been deployed. The deployment of State and NACER teams is now complete.
AUSMAT	Completed 174 visits to 80 aged care facilities.
Australian Defence Force	Have visited 593 facilities conducting clinical screens, and conducted a total number of 679 preventative support visits.
Recruitment, Consulting, and Staffing Association (RCSA)	Staff supplied to fill 24,670 shifts.
Healthcare Australia	Staff supplied filled 4,868 shifts for workforce surge and 2,295 shifts for NACER teams.
Mable	Supplied 130 staff to fill 2,711 shifts.
Aspen Medical	Supplied staff to fill 627 roles including clinical first responder deployments.
Health X	Supplied 37 staff to fill 1,000 shifts.
Torrens Health	Supplied staff to fill 680 shifts.
Western Health	Visited 37 facilities to provide assistance. Western health have finished their contract.
Residential Aged Care Assistants (RACA)	Supplied 54 RACAs to six facilities that have completed 813 shifts.
Residential Aged Care Safety Observers (RACSO)	Supplied 47 RACSOs to 18 facilities that have completed 1,120 shifts.

Provision of personal protective equipment (PPE)

A range of resources and online training on the use of PPE is available on the Department's website for aged care workers.

Since March 2020, the Commonwealth Government has been working with state and territory governments to ensure aged care facilities have sufficient PPE. PPE is dispatched both directly from the National Medical Stockpile (NMS) and by jurisdictions on the NMS' behalf, depending on the specific circumstances.

Over half a billion masks and approximately 53 million gowns, 261 million gloves, and 44 million goggles/face shields have been ordered for staggered delivery into the NMS through to January 2021.

As at 23 October 2020, the NMS has provided aged care facilities with approximately:

- 18 million masks
- 5 million gowns
- 11 million gloves
- 4 million goggles and face shields
- 90,000 bottles of hand sanitiser
- 160,000 clinical waste bags.

As announced by the Minister for Health and the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians on 30 September 2020, an additional seven million P2/N95 respirators from the National Medical Stockpile have been made available to residential aged care facilities in Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire to further supress COVID-19 infection rates.

Testing of aged care residents and staff

The Australian Government has engaged Sonic Healthcare to provide a dedicated pathology service for the testing of suspected cases of COVID-19 in residential aged care facilities. The service is intended to supplement existing public health pathology services in aged care through the provision of services from the private sector as required.

As at 13 October, Sonic Healthcare has conducted 188,985 COVID-19 tests at 2,025 unique residential aged care facilities nationally. This includes 166,657 COVID-19 tests at 569 unique residential aged care facilities in Victoria.

Testing regimens for residents and staff at aged care facilities that experience a COVID-19 outbreak is based on advice from the relevant Public Health Unit.

To help the sector to drive down case numbers, the Australian Government has expanded capacity for testing of asymptomatic aged care workers in Victoria. Facilities in hot spot locations are being prioritised, most recently including East Preston, Shepparton, Chadstone and Kilmore.

Infection control and audits

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission) commenced additional Infection Control Monitoring visits in Victoria from 3 August 2020 in response to the increasing risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in residential aged care services, following significant community transmission of COVID-19 in Victoria.

The purpose of the visit is to observe infection control practices, to ensure that staff, management and visitors are adhering to safe personal protective equipment protocols and to safe infection control arrangements as required under the quality standards.

The Commission has extended the infection control monitoring program rolled out in Victoria, into other jurisdictions, working in partnership with local health authorities. This program is in addition to the Commission's usual assessment and auditing program, and includes spot checks to residential aged care services, without an outbreak, to check compliance with PPE and infection control arrangements. This program in Victoria has been complemented by compliance checks to 593 residential aged care facilities by Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel, and 37 facilities by Western Health personnel.

From 1 March 2020, the Commission has undertaken 1,390 visits nationally relating to infection control, including spot checks and 1,831 unannounced visits and announced/short notice visits.

All residential aged care facilities will be required to engage an onsite clinical lead to provide leadership and increase capacity in relation to infection prevention and control. The Australian Government is providing a second payment of the COVID-19 supplement to assist facilities in meeting the additional costs of preparing for and responding to COVID-19.

Under the Commonwealth-State Plan to boost preparedness, states and territories are complementing the activity being undertaken by the Commission through additional site visits by state health services at the local level. These visits are strengthening state health service relationships with local aged care services as part of the standing up of joint health aged care emergency response centres in each jurisdiction.

Table 3 - Total Quality Assessment and Monitoring Activities with residential services, by type and month – to 22 October 2020

Regulatory Activities	Mar-20	Apr- 20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul- 20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20*	Total
Site visits	97	12	94	115	132	330	581	386	1,747
Non-site activities	3,127	415	80	68	1,378	2,724	383	210	8,386
Total activities	3,224	427	174	183	1,510	3,054	964	596	10,133

Includes data up to 22 October 2020.

Appendix 1: National residential aged care services with two or more positive COVID-19 cases

Victorian data is from the Public Health Events Surveillance System (PHESS). Case data for residential aged care facilities in all states except Victoria is collected by the Commonwealth Government.

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
1	NSW	Dorothy Henderson Lodge, BaptistCare	22	17	11	5	5	6	Y
2	NSW	Newmarch House Aged Care Facility	71	37	18	34	34	19[8]	Y
3	NSW	Opal Aged Care Bankstown	6	3	0	3	3	3	Y
4	NSW	Storm Village - Anglican Care	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
5	TAS	Melaleuca Home For The Aged	2	1	0	1	1	1	Y
6	VIC	Arcare Burnside	5	0	0	5	5	0	Y
7	VIC	Arcare Craigieburn	81	37	22	44	44	15	Y
8	VIC	Arcare Maidstone	7	0	0	7	7	0	N
9	VIC	Arcare Sydenham	48	22	16	26	26	6	Y
10	VIC	Assisi Centre Aged Care	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y

[7] In Victoria, a death is reported when a person with COVID-19 dies during an active outbreak at an aged care facility, irrespective of the cause of death.
[8] In respect to Newmarch House, the 19 includes the deaths of two residents who had COVID-19 but were considered to have passed away from other causes.

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
11	VIC	Aurrum Healesville	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
12	VIC	Aurrum Plenty	83	47	34	36	36	13	Y
13	VIC	Aurrum Reservoir	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y
14	VIC	Avonlea Grange Hostel	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
15	VIC	Baptcare Brookview Community	21	10	9	11	11	1	N
16	VIC	Baptcare Strathalan Community	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
17	VIC	Baptcare The Orchards Community	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
18	VIC	Baptcare Wyndham Lodge Community	232	101	71	131	131	30	N
19	VIC	Benetas St George's	70	32	20	38	38	12	Y
20	VIC	Bill Crawford Lodge	5	2	2	3	3	0	Y
21	VIC	BlueCross Autumdale	54	24	11	30	30	13	Y
22	VIC	BlueCross Baradine	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
23	VIC	BlueCross Chelsea Manor	5	0	0	5	5	0	Y
24	VIC	BlueCross Elly Kay	2	1	0	1	1	1	Y

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
25	VIC	BlueCross Ivanhoe	5	0	0	5	5	0	Y
26	VIC	BlueCross Riverlea (1st Outbreak)	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y
27	VIC	BlueCross Riverlea (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
28	VIC	BlueCross Ruckers Hill	108	48	36	60	60	12	Y
29	VIC	BlueCross Silverwood	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y
30	VIC	BlueCross The Boulevard	69	36	22	33	33	14	Y
31	VIC	BlueCross Westgarth	32	14	8	18	18	6	Y
32	VIC	Boyne Russell House	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y
33	VIC	Bupa Edithvale	78	44	26	34	34	18	Y
34	VIC	Bupa Greensborough	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
35	VIC	Bupa Sunshine	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
36	VIC	Bupa Templestowe	11	3	1	8	8	2	Y
37	VIC	Bupa Traralgon	19	7	5	12	12	2	Y
38	VIC	Bupa Woodend	5	1	1	4	4	0	Y

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
39	VIC	Campbell Place Aged Care Facility	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
40	VIC	Chomley House Hostel	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
41	VIC	Churches of Christ Care Arcadia Aged Care Service Essendon	22	10	6	12	12	4	Y
42	VIC	Coppin Centre Melbourne	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
43	VIC	Craigcare Moonee Ponds	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
44	VIC	Craigcare Pascoe Vale	94	47	31	47	47	16	Y
45	VIC	Cumberland Manor	107	53	42	54	54	11	Y
46	VIC	Doutta Galla Footscray Aged Care Facility (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
47	VIC	Doutta Galla Footscray Aged Care Facility (2nd Outbreak)	56	30	21	26	26	9	Y
48	VIC	Doutta Galla Lynch's Bridge Aged Care Facility	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
49	VIC	Doutta Galla Woornack Aged Care Facility	42	20	12	22	22	8	N
50	VIC	Doutta Galla Yarraville Village Aged Care Facility	85	42	25	43	43	17	Y
51	VIC	Edenvale Manor Aged Care Facility	20	14	10	6	6	4	N
52	VIC	Embracia in Reservoir (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
53	VIC	Embracia in Reservoir (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
54	VIC	Embracia Moonee Valley	59	26	17	33	33	9	N
55	VIC	Epping Gardens	189	103	65	86	86	38	Y
56	VIC	Estia Health Ardeer	134	49	32	85	85	17	Y
57	VIC	Estia Health Glen Waverley	7	2	2	5	5	0	Y
58	VIC	Estia Health Heidelberg West	99	29	19	70	68	10	N
59	VIC	Estia Health Keilor (1st Outbreak)	4	2	2	2	2	0	Y
60	VIC	Estia Health Keilor (2nd Outbreak)	42	24	17	18	17	6	N
61	VIC	Estia Health Keysborough	21	8	5	13	13	3	Y
62	VIC	Estia Health Ringwood (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
63	VIC	Estia Health Ringwood (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	0	0	N
64	VIC	Estia Health South Morang	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y
65	VIC	Florence Aged Care Facility	46	28	20	18	18	8	Y
66	VIC	Fronditha Thalpori Aged Care Services - St Albans	3	1	0	2	2	1	Y

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
67	VIC	Glendale Aged Care	93	45	29	48	48	16	Y
68	VIC	Glenlyn Aged Care Facility	63	40	36	23	23	4	Y
69	VIC	Grace Of Mary Greek Cypriot Elderly Hostel	55	22	11	33	33	11	Y
70	VIC	Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
71	VIC	Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
72	VIC	HammondCare - Caulfield Village Aged care Facility	2	2	2	0	0	0	Y
73	VIC	Holloway Aged Care Services	3	1	0	2	2	1	Y
74	VIC	James Barker House	3	1	1	2	2	0	Y
75	VIC	Japara Central Park	40	18	15	22	22	3	Y
76	VIC	Japara Elanora	63	31	19	32	32	12	N
77	VIC	Japara Goonawarra	103	53	33	50	50	20	N
78	VIC	Japara Millward	37	19	15	18	18	4	Y
79	VIC	Japara The Regent	42	21	18	21	21	3	Y
80	VIC	Kalyna Care	101	57	31	44	44	26	Y

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
81	VIC	Kirkbrae Kilsyth Nursing Home	115	61	41	54	54	20	Y
82	VIC	Liscombe House	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
83	VIC	Little Sisters of the Poor St Joseph's Home	2	1	0	1	1	1	Y
84	VIC	Lynden Aged Care	3	1	1	2	2	0	Y
85	VIC	Maculata Place Shepparton Villlages	3	1	1	2	2	0	Y
86	VIC	Mecwacare John Atchison Centre	83	44	26	39	39	18	Y
87	VIC	Melbourne Hebrew Memorial Nursing Home (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
88	VIC	Melbourne Hebrew Memorial Nursing Home (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
89	VIC	Menarock Life Emmavale Gardens	4	1	1	3	3	0	Y
90	VIC	Menarock Life Essendon Aged Care	47	20	13	27	27	7	Y
91	VIC	Menarock Life McGregor Gardens Aged Care	4	1	1	3	3	0	Y
92	VIC	Menarock Life Rosehill Aged Care Facility	82	51	35	31	31	16	Y
93	VIC	Mercy Place Dandenong	21	13	10	8	8	3	Y
94	VIC	Mercy Place Montrose	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
95	VIC	Mercy Place Parkville	97	58	36	39	39	22	N
96	VIC	Mercy Place Templestowe	2	1	1	1	1	0	Y
97	VIC	Mercy Place Wyndham	5	2	1	3	3	1	Y
98	VIC	Mitchell House Hostel Morwell	2	1	1	1	1	0	Y
99	VIC	Montefiore Homes Community Residence Jewish Care Hannah and Daryl Cohen Centre Windsor Aged Care Facility	67	33	31	34	34	2	Y
100	VIC	Opal Hobsons Bay Altona North	37	22	13	15	15	9	N
101	VIC	Opal South Valley	57	32	24	25	25	8	Y
102	VIC	Outlook Gardens Aged Care	99	41	28	58	58	13	Y
103	VIC	Point Cook Manor Aged Care	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
104	VIC	Princeton View	70	27	18	43	43	9	Y
105	VIC	Rathdowne Place Carlton	9	1	1	8	8	0	Y
106	VIC	Regis Brighton	67	24	13	43	43	11	Y
107	VIC	Regis Cranbourne	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
108	VIC	Regis Fawkner	5	4	3	1	1	1	Y

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
109	VIC	Regis Macleod	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
110	VIC	Riddell Gardens Hostel	2	2	0	0	0	2	Y
111	VIC	Royal Freemasons Bacchus Marsh	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
112	VIC	Royal Freemasons Gregory Lodge	66	39	24	27	27	15	Y
113	VIC	Royal Freemasons Monash Gardens Hostel	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
114	VIC	Sheridan Aged Care (Kyabram District Health Service)	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y
115	VIC	St Basil's Homes for the Aged in Victoria	188	94	49	94	94	45	Y
116	VIC	St Vincent's Care Services Eltham - Eltham Lodge	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
117	VIC	Sutton Park Assisted Aged Care	77	46	39	31	31	7	Y
118	VIC	Twin Parks Aged Care Centre	125	79	57	46	46	22	Y
119	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Box Hill	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
120	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Kingsville	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y
121	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Preston (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	Y
122	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Preston (2nd Outbreak)	2	0	0	2	1	0	N

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths[7]	Resolved (Y/N)
123	VIC	Villa Maria Catholic Homes Berwick Aged Care Residence	8	5	5	3	3	0	Y
124	VIC	Villa Maria Catholic Homes Corpus Christi Aged Care Residence	3	0	0	3	3	0	Y
125	VIC	Villa Maria Catholic Homes St Bernadette's Aged Care Residence	17	4	1	13	13	3	Y
126	VIC	Village Glen Aged Care Residences - Mornington	39	21	16	18	18	5	Y
127	VIC	Westernport Nursing Home	2	0	0	2	2	0	Y