

To: Minister Colbeck

cc: Minister Hunt

Subject: MEETING BRIEF: WEBINAR WITH PEAK BODIES ON RESIDENTIAL CARE VISITOR RESTRICTIONS ON 24 APRIL 2020

Minister Colbeck				Date: / /
Comments:				
Contact Officer:	Amy Laffan	First Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Reform and Compliance Division	Ph: (02) 6289 9707	s22(1)(a)(ii)
Clearance Officer:	Michael Lye	Deputy Secretary, Aging and Aged Care Group	Ph: (02) 6289 4648	s22(1)(a)(ii)

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3. The Prime Minister and Chief Medical Officer made statements on visitor restrictions on the same day calling for providers to be proportionate around their rules for visitation and that is not reasonable to prevent visits and lock down facilities given the impact on resident welfare. (see background).
4. Providers and aged care industry peak bodies have expressed concern with these statements and requested a webinar to clarify the position on entry restrictions.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

- Aged care providers must balance the need to protect residents, staff and others from the risk of transmission of COVID-19, while supporting the rights and wellbeing of consumers. This requires a risk-based approach that is informed by the obligations of the provider to all residents in the facility, as well as the needs, values and preferences of individual consumers.
- Family members who are concerned about the care being provided to loved ones in residential aged care facilities are encouraged to contact the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.
- Providers should make measures such as phone or video calls accessible to all residents to enable regular communication with family members. Family and friends are strongly encouraged to maintain contact with residents by phone and other social communication apps, as appropriate.
- The Department has received a number of correspondence from family of residents who cannot currently visit their loved ones and are concerned for their welfare.

- Anecdotally the Department is aware that a number of facilities adopted a total ban on any visitors entering in order to protect residents from COVID-19. Services were also limiting or ceasing offering residential respite services and expressed concern about residents leaving facilities for outings and returning.
- The Prime Minister said on 21 April 2020, "It is not acceptable, fair or compassionate for any residential aged care facilities to ban visits from carers and families."
- The Chief Medical Officer said, "It is not reasonable or fair to people who may have been used to getting their family coming every day, who may have dementia, to be denied access to their families."
- The Department received feedback from peak bodies on behalf of a number of providers who felt disheartened by the Prime Minister and Chief Medical Officer's words, as they were implementing restrictions to ensure the safety of their residents.

s22(1)(a)(ii)