



# COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities

## National snapshot

As at 8:00am on 12 March 2021 there are no active cases of COVID-19 related to aged care.

**Table 1: Aged Care COVID-19 data as at 0800 on 12 March 2021**

Active outbreaks	0
Active resident cases	0
Active staff cases	0
Deaths	678 <sup>1</sup>
Total number of residential aged care facilities that have had an outbreak	214
Total number of outbreaks at residential aged care facilities	221
Number of residential aged care facilities with resolved outbreaks	214 (221 outbreaks closed) <sup>2</sup>
Number of residential aged care facilities with only one case (resident or staff member) of COVID-19	94
Total resident cases	2,029
Recovered resident cases	1,351
Total staff cases	2,227
Recovered staff cases	2,227

<sup>1</sup> The figure for deaths in RACFS excludes 7 cases that were identified in transition care services.

<sup>2</sup> Some residential aged care facilities have had more than one outbreak.

## Analysis

### Current situation in Australia

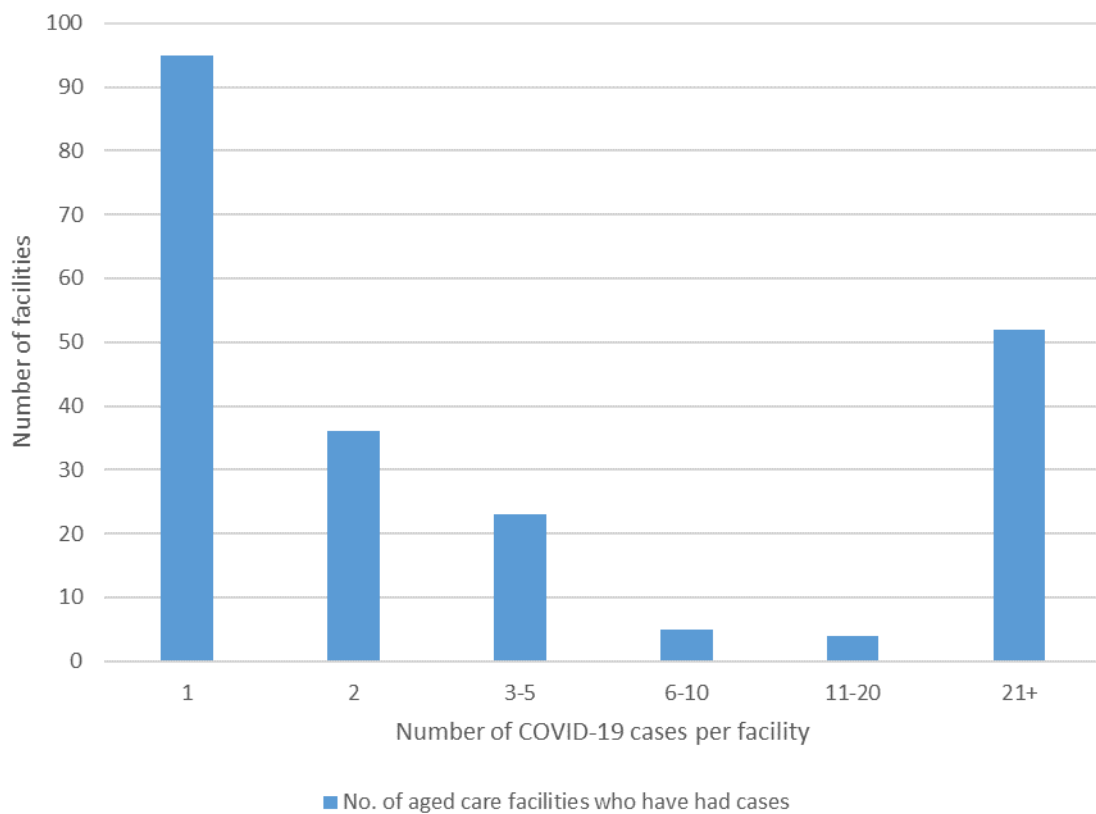
In Australia, a total of 29,090 cases of COVID-19 have been reported, including 113 active cases and 909 deaths.

As at 5 March 2021, there are no active cases of COVID-19 in a staff member in a Commonwealth funded aged care service.

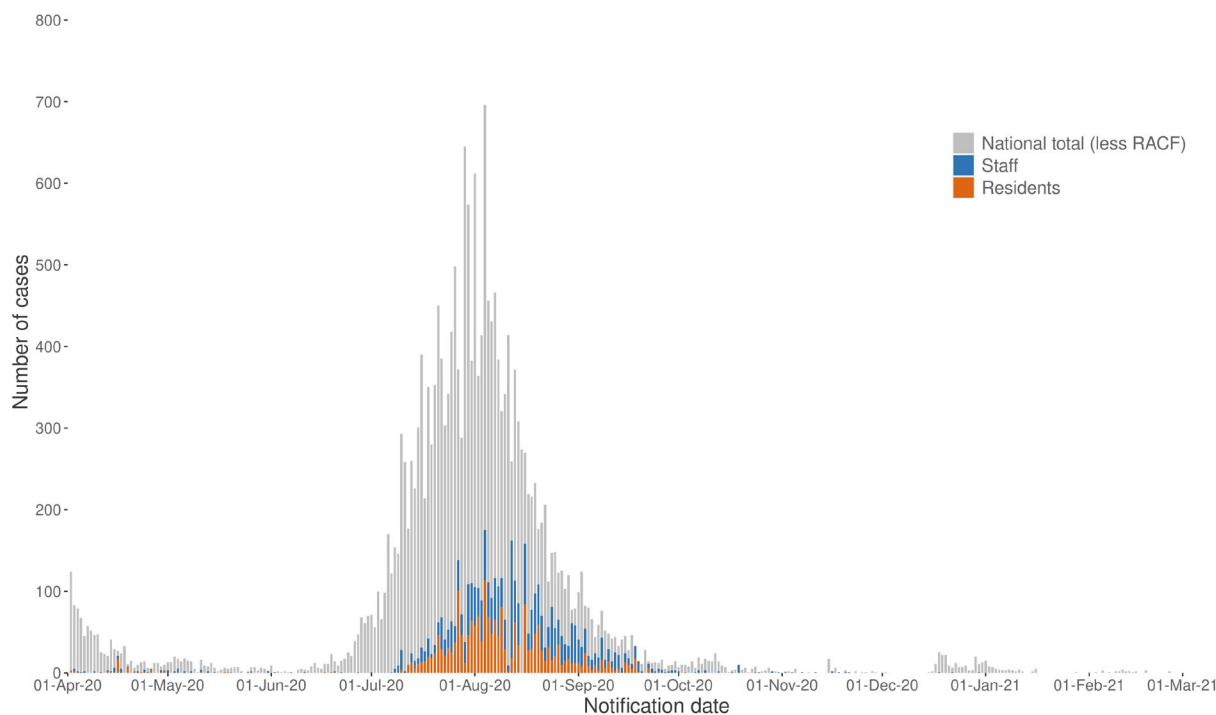
As at 8:00am on 5 March 2021, there are no active cases in residential aged care recipients. The last new active case of COVID-19 in a residential aged care recipient was identified on 26 September 2020.

There have been no active cases of COVID-19 in aged care recipients since 28 October 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 215 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: Number of daily reported COVID-19 cases in Australian residential aged care facilities overlaid with national locally acquired cases<sup>3</sup>.**

### 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.

By comparison, Canada has experienced more than 21 times the number of deaths in care homes than Australia as at 12 March 2021.

### Influenza cases and influenza-associated deaths

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<sup>4</sup>.

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

<sup>3</sup> National daily cases sourced from NNDSS data as at 11 March 2021 and are filtered to locally acquired cases. Case numbers reflect the date of reporting which may differ to diagnosis date. Residential aged care facility staff and resident data sourced from the Department of Health Aged Care COVID Liaison Team. Totals reflect the date of case report and may be affected by delayed reporting.

'RACF' refers to cases in residential aged care facilities (staff and residents)

<sup>4</sup> 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 those aged over 65 years, in the period 1 January to 31 December for each year\*:

- The 2017 influenza calendar year data recorded the highest levels of influenza activity since 2009 swine flu pandemic with over 1,064 older Australians dying from influenza.
- In 2018, 115 older Australians died from influenza.
- In 2019, 839 older Australians died from influenza.
- In 2020, 28 older Australians died from influenza.

\* The data provided were extracted from the NNDSS on 20 January 2021. NNDSS data is analysed and reported based on diagnosis date, which is the true onset date of a case if known, otherwise it is the earliest of the specimen date, the notification date or the notification received date. 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.

†No one single system, including notification data, provides the full picture on influenza, because influenza is a common disease and its presenting symptoms are non-specific, resulting in an under-representation of activity in national systems. The epidemiology of influenza is informed by a number of different systems, of which only one, national notification data, is presented here. Elements of the COVID-19 response, including social distancing measures, diversion of testing resources to COVID-19 diagnosis and resource implications of response activities, are affecting the number of notifiable disease cases notified to the NNDSS. Case numbers presented may not reflect actual notification trends. These effects may differ by jurisdiction

§Year on year comparisons of deaths in notified cases of influenza may not be reliable due to retrospective revision, variation across jurisdictions in methodology, representativeness and timeliness of death data. Further, cases' outcome of infection may be retrospectively updated to "died" at a later point in the year.

### 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.

**Table 2: Workforce resources supplied to residential aged care facilities**

Agency	Resources Supplied (as at 7 March 2021)
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.

Agency	Resources Supplied (as at 7 March 2021)
Recruitment, Consulting, and Staffing Association (RCSA)	Staff supplied to fill 24,746 shifts.
Healthcare Australia	Staff supplied filled 5,249 shifts for workforce surge and 2,295 shifts for NACER teams.
Mable	Supplied 130 staff to fill 2,711 shifts.
Aspen Medical	Supplied 270 staff to fill 750 roles including clinical first responders.
Health X	Supplied 40 staff to fill 1,799 shifts.
Torrens Health	Supplied 1,208 shifts in surge workforce roles and 1,270 shifts as Residential Aged Care visitation Assistants (RACVAs).
Western Health	Visited 37 facilities to provide assistance. Agency is continuing to provide support to one aged care facility.
Residential Aged Care Assistants (RACA)	Supplied 54 RACAs to six facilities that have completed 832 shifts.
Residential Aged Care Safety Observers (RACSO)	Supplied 47 RACSOs to 18 facilities that have completed 1,346 shifts.
Residential Aged Care Visitation Assistant (RACVA)	RACVAs completed 1,205 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, 164 million gloves, and 44 million goggles/face shields have been ordered for staggered delivery into the NMS through to 2021.

As at 9 March 2021, the NMS has provided aged care facilities with approximately:

- 20 million masks
- 5 million gowns
- 11 million gloves
- 4 million goggles and face shields
- 90,000 bottles of hand sanitiser

The NMS remains well positioned to respond rapidly to critical shortages of PPE and other medical supplies anywhere in Australia. This includes a series of bulk dispatches of personal protective equipment (PPE) intended to avert any potential critical supply shortages, as well as urgent deployments to organisations and individuals at risk of exposure to COVID-19.

### **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 2 March 2021, Sonic Healthcare has conducted 327,890 COVID-19 tests at 2,368 unique residential aged care facilities nationally. This includes 275,680 COVID-19 tests at 728 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. Workers in residential aged care facilities are being tested fortnightly in metropolitan Melbourne, and monthly in regional Victoria.

The Australian Government provided asymptomatic testing through SONIC to the 31 RACFs in the Northern Beaches of NSW in December 2020 testing was offered to 89 RACFs in Sydney's Inner West in January 2021. This testing program has concluded.

This testing service is intended to supplement existing public health pathology services in aged care through the provision of services from the private sector as required.

Asymptomatic testing for six residential aged care facilities in Western Australia concluded on 6 February 2021. All asymptomatic testing results were negative. No further testing is planned.

The Victorian Aged Care Response Centre contacted 89 RACFs linked to exposure sites associated with the Grand Hyatt Hotel outbreak and 99 RACFs linked to exposure sites associated with the Holiday Inn Outbreak. Asymptomatic testing was brought forward for these sites.

The Victorian Aged Care Response Centre is continuing ongoing surveillance and testing of residential aged care facilities. Between 22 and 28 February 2021, 183 facilities have participated in asymptomatic testing, with a total of 3,970 staff and residents being tested.

### **Vaccination in Residential Aged Care Facilities**

The Australian Government has identified consumers and staff in RACFs as being high priority targets for Phase 1 of its vaccine rollout. They will be among the first to receive the vaccine (along with residents of disability facilities).

As at 11 March 2021, 35,926 aged and disability care residents have been vaccinated at 388 residential aged and disability care facilities.

### **Infection control and audits**

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission) is conducting an ongoing infection control monitoring program in all Australian 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.

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.

Between 1 March 2020 and 11 March 2021, the Commission undertook 3,389 unannounced visits and announced/short notice visits nationally. During this period 2,807 visits relating to infection control were made nationally.

All residential aged care facilities are 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.

In addition, under the Commonwealth-State Plan to boost aged care 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, which includes work relating to infection prevention and control (see Table 3 below). 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.

The Australian Government is working collaboratively with the states and territories to further bolster infection prevention and control through high quality face-to-face training in the aged care sector. In particular, the Government has committed \$57.8 million to fund states and territories to deploy accredited infection prevention and control (IPC) experts into residential aged care facilities to provide training, and assist with the refinement of outbreak management plans where needed.

**Table 3: Total Quality Assessment and Monitoring Activities with residential services (including IPC), by type and month 1 March – to 4 March 2021**

Regulatory Activities	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Total
<b>Site visits</b>	97	12	94	115	132	329	580	485	329	362	292	258	136	3,221
<b>Non-site activities</b>	3,138	419	80	73	1,405	2,776	412	318	445	1,089	320	315	22	10,812
<b>Total activities</b>	<b>3,235</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>1,537</b>	<b>3,105</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>1,451</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>14,033</b>

## 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 <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
1	NSW	Dorothy Henderson Lodge, BaptistCare	22	17	11	5	5	6	R
2	NSW	Newmarch House Aged Care Facility	71	37	18	34	34	19	R
3	NSW	Opal Aged Care Bankstown	6	3	0	3	3	3	R
4	NSW	Storm Village - Anglican Care	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
5	SA	Anglicare Brompton	4	0	0	4	4	0	R
6	TAS	Melaleuca Home For The Aged	2	1	0	1	1	1	R
7	VIC	Arcare Burnside	5	0	0	5	5	0	R
8	VIC	Arcare Craigieburn	82	37	22	45	45	15	R
9	VIC	Arcare Maidstone	7	0	0	7	7	0	R
10	VIC	Arcare Sydenham	47	22	16	25	25	6	R
11	VIC	Assisi Centre Aged Care	3	0	0	3	3	0	R
12	VIC	Aurrum Healesville	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
13	VIC	Aurrum Plenty	83	47	34	36	36	13	R
14	VIC	Aurrum Reservoir	3	0	0	3	3	0	R

<sup>5</sup> 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.



No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
15	VIC	Avonlea Grange Hostel	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
16	VIC	Baptcare Brookview Community	21	10	9	11	11	1	R
17	VIC	Baptcare Strathalan Community	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
18	VIC	Baptcare The Orchards Community	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
19	VIC	Baptcare Wyndham Lodge Community	232	101	71	131	131	30	R
20	VIC	Benetas St George's	70	32	20	38	38	12	R
21	VIC	Bill Crawford Lodge	5	2	2	3	3	0	R
22	VIC	BlueCross Autumdale	54	24	11	30	30	13	R
23	VIC	BlueCross Baradine	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
24	VIC	BlueCross Chelsea Manor	5	0	0	5	5	0	R
25	VIC	BlueCross Elly Kay	2	1	0	1	1	1	R
26	VIC	BlueCross Ivanhoe	5	0	0	5	5	0	R
27	VIC	BlueCross Riverlea (1st Outbreak)	3	0	0	3	3	0	R
28	VIC	BlueCross Riverlea (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
29	VIC	BlueCross Ruckers Hill	108	48	36	60	60	12	R
30	VIC	BlueCross Silverwood	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
31	VIC	BlueCross The Boulevard	69	36	22	33	33	14	R
32	VIC	BlueCross Westgarth	32	14	8	18	18	6	R

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
33	VIC	Boyne Russell House	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
34	VIC	Bupa Edithvale	78	44	26	34	34	18	R
35	VIC	Bupa Greensborough	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
36	VIC	Bupa Sunshine	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
37	VIC	Bupa Templestowe	11	3	1	8	8	2	R
38	VIC	Bupa Traralgon	19	7	5	12	12	2	R
39	VIC	Bupa Woodend	4	1	1	3	3	0	R
40	VIC	Campbell Place Aged Care Facility	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
41	VIC	Chomley House Hostel	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
42	VIC	Churches of Christ Care Arcadia Aged Care Service Essendon	22	10	6	12	12	4	R
43	VIC	Coppin Centre Melbourne	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
44	VIC	Craigcare Pascoe Vale	94	47	31	47	47	16	R
45	VIC	Cumberland Manor	107	53	42	54	54	11	R
46	VIC	Doutta Galla Footscray Aged Care Facility (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
47	VIC	Doutta Galla Footscray Aged Care Facility (2nd Outbreak)	56	30	21	26	26	9	R
48	VIC	Doutta Galla Lynch's Bridge Aged Care Facility	2	0	0	2	2	0	R

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
49	VIC	Doutta Galla Woorneck Aged Care Facility	42	20	12	22	22	8	R
50	VIC	Doutta Galla Yarraville Village Aged Care Facility	86	42	25	44	44	17	R
51	VIC	Edenvale Manor Aged Care Facility	20	14	10	6	6	4	R
52	VIC	Embracia in Reservoir (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
53	VIC	Embracia in Reservoir (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
54	VIC	Embracia Moonee Valley	61	26	17	35	35	9	R
55	VIC	Epping Gardens	190	103	65	87	87	38	R
56	VIC	Estia Health Ardeer	133	49	32	84	84	17	R
57	VIC	Estia Health Glen Waverley	6	2	2	4	4	0	R
58	VIC	Estia Health Heidelberg West	97	29	19	68	67	10	R
59	VIC	Estia Health Keilor (1st Outbreak)	4	2	2	2	2	0	R
60	VIC	Estia Health Keilor (2nd Outbreak)	42	24	18	18	18	6	R
61	VIC	Estia Health Keysborough	21	8	5	13	13	3	R
62	VIC	Estia Health Ringwood (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
63	VIC	Estia Health Ringwood (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
64	VIC	Florence Aged Care Facility	46	28	20	18	18	8	R
65	VIC	Froniditha Thalpori Aged Care Services - St Albans	3	1	0	2	2	1	R
66	VIC	Glendale Aged Care	93	45	29	48	48	16	R
67	VIC	Glenlyn Aged Care Facility	63	40	36	23	23	4	R

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
68	VIC	Grace Of Mary Greek Cypriot Elderly Hostel	55	22	11	33	33	11	R
69	VIC	Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
70	VIC	Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
71	VIC	HammondCare - Caulfield Village Aged care Facility	2	2	2	0	0	0	R
72	VIC	Holloway Aged Care Services	3	1	0	2	2	1	R
73	VIC	James Barker House	3	1	1	2	2	0	R
74	VIC	Japara Central Park	40	18	15	22	22	3	R
75	VIC	Japara Elanora	63	31	19	32	32	12	R
76	VIC	Japara Goonawarra	103	53	33	50	50	20	R
77	VIC	Japara Millward	36	19	15	17	17	4	R
78	VIC	Japara The Regent	42	21	18	21	21	3	R
79	VIC	Kalya Care	101	57	31	44	44	26	R
80	VIC	Kirkbrae Kilsyth Nursing Home	115	61	40	54	54	21	R
81	VIC	Liscombe House	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
82	VIC	Little Sisters of the Poor St Joseph's Home	2	1	0	1	1	1	R
83	VIC	Lynden Aged Care	3	1	1	2	2	0	R
84	VIC	Maculata Place Shepparton Villages	3	1	1	2	2	0	R
85	VIC	Martin Luther Homes The Basin	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
86	VIC	Mecwacare John Atchison Centre	84	45	27	39	39	18	R

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
87	VIC	Melbourne Hebrew Memorial Nursing Home (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
88	VIC	Melbourne Hebrew Memorial Nursing Home (2nd Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
89	VIC	Menarock Life Emmavale Gardens	4	1	1	3	3	0	R
90	VIC	Menarock Life Essendon Aged Care	47	20	13	27	27	7	R
91	VIC	Menarock Life McGregor Gardens Aged Care	4	1	1	3	3	0	R
92	VIC	Menarock Life Rosehill Aged Care Facility	82	51	34	31	31	17	R
93	VIC	Mercy Place Dandenong	21	13	10	8	8	3	R
94	VIC	Mercy Place Montrose	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
95	VIC	Mercy Place Parkville	97	58	36	39	39	22	R
96	VIC	Mercy Place Templestowe	2	1	1	1	1	0	R
97	VIC	Mercy Place Wyndham	5	2	1	3	3	1	R
98	VIC	Mitchell House Hostel Morwell	2	1	1	1	1	0	R
99	VIC	Montefiore Homes Community Residence Jewish Care Hannah and Daryl Cohen Centre Windsor Aged Care Facility	67	33	31	34	34	2	R
100	VIC	Opal Hobsons Bay Altona North	37	22	13	15	15	9	R
101	VIC	Opal South Valley	56	32	24	24	24	8	R
102	VIC	Outlook Gardens Aged Care	99	41	28	58	58	13	R

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
103	VIC	Point Cook Manor Aged Care	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
104	VIC	Princeton View	71	28	19	43	43	9	R
105	VIC	Rathdowne Place Carlton	9	1	1	8	8	0	R
106	VIC	Regis Brighton	67	24	13	43	43	11	R
107	VIC	Regis Cranbourne	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
108	VIC	Regis Fawkner	5	4	3	1	1	1	R
109	VIC	Regis Macleod	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
110	VIC	Regis Macleod (2nd Outbreak)	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
111	VIC	Riddell Gardens Hostel	2	2	0	0	0	2	R
112	VIC	Royal Freemasons Gregory Lodge	66	39	24	27	27	15	R
113	VIC	Royal Freemasons Monash Gardens Hostel	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
114	VIC	Sheridan Aged Care (Kyabram District Health Service)	3	0	0	3	3	0	R
115	VIC	St Basil's Homes for the Aged in Victoria	191	94	49	97	97	45	R
116	VIC	St Vincent's Care Services Eltham - Eltham Lodge	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
117	VIC	Sutton Park Assisted Aged Care	77	46	39	31	31	7	R
118	VIC	Twin Parks Aged Care Centre	125	79	57	46	46	22	R
119	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Box Hill	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
120	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Kingsville	2	0	0	2	2	0	R

No	State	Residential Aged Care Facility	Total Cases	Resident total	Resident resolved	Staff total	Staff Resolved	Resident deaths <sup>5</sup>	Resolved / Active
121	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Preston (1st Outbreak)	1	0	0	1	1	0	R
122	VIC	Uniting AgeWell Preston (2nd Outbreak)	2	0	0	2	2	0	R
123	VIC	Villa Maria Catholic Homes Berwick Aged Care Residence	8	5	5	3	3	0	R
124	VIC	Villa Maria Catholic Homes Corpus Christi Aged Care Residence	3	0	0	3	3	0	R
125	VIC	Villa Maria Catholic Homes St Bernadette's Aged Care Residence	17	4	1	13	13	3	R
126	VIC	Village Glen Aged Care Residences - Mornington	38	21	16	17	17	5	R
127	VIC	Westernport Nursing Home	2	0	0	2	2	0	R