

# Aged Care COVID Update

## Christian Homes Tasmania

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) wrote to Christian Homes Tasmania (CHT) management to seek an update on information in relation to your facility and their response to the current Omicron COVID-19 situation in the Tasmanian community, including the impact this is having on you and the subsequent care of residents.

Specifically, the ANMF has asked of your facility the following questions in italics, and response from your employer in bold:

- 1. Could you please provide details on the strategies implemented to reduce transmission of the Omicron strain in your facility/facilities? Or alternatively, please feel free to provide a copy of your outbreak management plan.*

**Our Outbreak Management Plan has been reviewed by our Outbreak Management Team in response to Omicron.**

- **CHT regularly engage with the ACEOC**
- **RAT testing is currently being undertaken for all staff on arrival for each shift**
- **TIER 3 PPE is currently in place**

- 2. Can you confirm that you have sufficient PPE and hand sanitizer to allow staff, and residents, to be kept safe during this pandemic (particularly if there were to be an outbreak at your facility)?*

**Yes, CHT have sufficient PPE and hand sanitiser to allow staff and residents to be kept safe**

- 3. Have staffing been fit tested for N95 masks? If no, when is this to occur and what are the interim safety measures that will be established while staff are waiting for fit testing?*

**Staff have been supported with education, resources and support to undertake fit checking for N95 masks.**

4. *What payments or access to special leave will be granted for staff who are required to isolate pending getting access to a COVID test and obtaining the subsequent result? Noting that access to testing is now significantly delayed.*

**This is not applicable given the introduction of RAT Testing as a diagnostic tool and the fact that RAT testing is currently being undertaken for all staff on arrival for each shift**

5. *In the instance that staff are required to receive a third COVID booster dose, will there be access to additional special paid leave/time to attend a booster appointment? If a staff member has an adverse reaction to the booster, will paid leave cover this time as well?*

**Booster Vaccination clinics have already been held at both of our sites and staff that were on shifts were able to attend during paid time.**

6. *Are there any additional leave (over and above personal leave) arrangements available to staff who, not being unwell themselves, need to self-isolate or care for someone (e.g. child) that will be provided?*

**Staff who have received a COVID Positive result following time in our workplace are eligible for Paid Pandemic Leave that does not come out of their entitlements.**

7. *Will you be providing Rapid Antigen Testing for staff members? If so, what will the process be for access to these tests?*

**Yes, see answer to question 1.**

8. *Are you willing to commit to presumptive workers compensation if a staff member becomes unwell, after a workplace exposure, with COVID-19?*

**This will be managed by our Workers Compensation Insurer.**

9. *If a number of staff become unwell (or are not unwell but are required to isolate pending test results) with COVID-19, what plan is in existence to maintain safe staffing levels?*

**CHT have a COVID Workforce Plan that forms part of our Outbreak Management Plan to address workforce matters and ensure safe staffing levels are maintained.**

10. *Are you employing additional administration staff to deal with access and entry to your facility and any extra record keeping that is required?*

**Yes**

11. *Could you please provide a copy of your staffing strategy and any staffing contingency plans?*  
*No copy provided in response.*

Further, as the Aged Care Sector is a Commonwealth responsibility, the ANMF Federal Acting Secretary Lori-Ann Sharp will be meeting with the Commonwealth to raise concerns and call for action:

1. To address the poor booster shot roll out in aged care
2. Ensuring that there is sufficient PPE in all aged care facilities
3. Enable access to Rapid Antigen Testing for all staff and visitors
4. To make available surge staffing availability

Also, the ANMF will be collaborating with the Tasmanian Department of Health on behalf of Aged Care members via the State COVID Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) stakeholder meetings. The ANMF will continue to raise matters that the Department of Health can do to assist Aged Care Facilities such as training, education and advice.

**The ANMF Tasmanian Branch is 8000 plus members strong! Supporting nurses, midwives, and care workers as the only union in Tasmania employing nurses and care workers to represent members. This is why our Organisers and Member Support Team are uniquely positioned to understand your experiences, represent you in your workplace, and offer industrial advice that's relevant to you.**

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact our Member Support Team via email on [membersupport@anmftas.org.au](mailto:membersupport@anmftas.org.au). Email is the preferred and fastest way of contacting the team. Alternatively, you can phone 6223 6777.

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Authorised by Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary  
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