



Industry Code on Visiting Residential Aged Care Homes First Review - 29 May 2020

The Industry Code on Visiting Residential Aged Care Homes was reviewed on 29 May 2020. Considerable feedback from consumers, families, advocates, providers and the public as well as through the consumer and provider peak bodies was received as part of this process.

It was noted that:

There is substantial evidence that in response to the Code there has been a stark improvement and increase in the availability of visits to residents while still ensuring that residents are protected from COVID-19 by strict procedures to safeguard their safety.

1. There especially has been a significant decrease in complaints about a lack of visits on compassionate grounds, though some issues remain.
2. There are a few issues that will require ongoing monitoring, or possible adjustments to the Code, or action to reinforce the intent of the Code. These include conditions relating to medical appointments, the impact of limitations in frequency and duration of visits, the appropriate use of window visits as an alternative to in-room or in-person visits where those cannot occur, external visits by residents, and other matters.
3. The Code had been in operation for only two and a half weeks and some inconsistency in observance would be anticipated at this stage.
4. Acknowledging that, it was agreed that rather than changing a Code that is very new and still being promulgated within the sector, the first step should be to develop a set of Questions and Answers (Q&As) which explain certain Code provisions in more detail and where appropriate by example of best practice, and for such Q&As to be communicated to members by Peaks in order to assist in broader and more consistent adherence to the Code.
5. The success of this approach and the need, if any, for the Code itself to be amended, will be actively considered between now and the next review in three weeks.

During the next review period monitoring of Code compliance will continue and the Peak bodies endorsing the Code urge all parties to continue its implementation in line with the spirit and intention with which the Code was developed.

The Industry Code for Visiting Residential Aged Care Homes during COVID-19 has been developed and endorsed by:

Aged sector provider peak organisations	Consumer and Carers peak organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged & Community Services Australia • Aged Care Guild • Anglicare Australia • Baptist Care Australia • Catholic Health Australia • Leading Age Services Australia • UnitingCare Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers Australia • Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia • Dementia Australia • Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia • National Seniors Australia • Older Persons Advocacy Network