

# COVID-19 checklist to plan your communications

Residential aged care facilities (RACFs) all over Australia have already had to deal with their own COVID-19 outbreaks. They have generously shared what they've learned about the most appropriate ways to communicate with residents and their families over this challenging time.

As a result, OPAN (Older Persons Advocacy Network) and Elder Rights Advocacy (ERA) have developed a checklist to help you prepare for what may come. It goes hand in hand with OPAN's free COVID-19 Communications Toolkit.

Facility	Your responses and comments
How many COVID-19 cases are there among your residents?	
How many COVID-19 cases are there among your staff?	
What is your facility's current lockdown status?	
Where are infected residents being cared for? How many: ▶ are in hospital? ▶ are in RACF red/white zones? ▶ are in their rooms? ▶ are somewhere else?	
Communications	Your responses and comments
Are you sending daily update emails to family members? Who is responsible?	
Have you set up a webpage with FAQs and a summary of your daily emails? Who is responsible?	
Are you conducting regular Zoom meetings with families to maintain personal contact?	
Are you organising window visits between residents and their families?	
Have you distributed smartphones or tablets to residents for individual video visits with their families?	
Do you use Calendly (or a similar tool) to schedule video meetings between families and book communal smartphones and tablets?	

**Communications *continued*****Your responses and comments**

Have you provided families with relevant resources from OPAN's COVID-19 Communications Toolkit?

- ▶ Letter to residents and their families or representatives
- ▶ *'Know your rights during COVID-19'* fact sheet
- ▶ *'Requirements for bringing loved ones home during COVID-19'* fact sheet

Have you provided residents with relevant resources from OPAN's COVID-19 Communications Toolkit?

- ▶ Letter to residents and their families or representatives
- ▶ *'Know your rights during COVID-19'* fact sheet
- ▶ *'You may have noticed some changes around here'* postcard
- ▶ A thankyou note to reassure your residents during COVID-19

Have you displayed the poster from OPAN's COVID-19 Communications Toolkit around your facility?

- ▶ *'You may have noticed some changes around here'* poster

Have you let all families and residents know about the Dr Norman Swan videos?

Have you engaged a communications company to assist?

Do you have a media release ready to go?

**Families****Your responses and comments**

Do you have an established primary contact for each resident? Have you discussed with them their responsibilities for contacting other family members?

Have you appointed a person inside your facility for family members to liaise with? Have you provided families with a specific mobile or 1800 phone number to call?

Are you sending daily emails informing families of the status of the facility and keeping them abreast of updates?

Are you keeping families updated on sensitive family topics, such as food, laundry and waste management?

Have you spoken with families about their main issues and concerns?

## Advocates

## Your responses and comments

How many advocates are working with this facility?

## Issues

## Your responses and comments

What outstanding issues still need to be resolved to support your residents?

What does your facility need from ERA / OPAN / the Commonwealth Department of Health?

## FAQs

### Be ready to answer these questions anytime

## Your responses and comments

How often are your residents tested for COVID-19?

What is your facility's policy on:

- ▶ personal protective equipment (PPE)?
- ▶ flu vaccine?
- ▶ wearing masks?
- ▶ dealing with visitors?

At what point do you arrange hospital transfers?

How do you manage PPE waste management?



Contact OPAN or Elder Rights Advocacy (ERA) to find out more about COVID-19 resources and support for your residents and their families.

 Freecall **1800 700 600**  
6am–10pm AEST, 7 days



[era.asn.au](http://era.asn.au)  
[opan.com.au/covidresourcesvic](http://opan.com.au/covidresourcesvic)