

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

Pandemic Declaration Accountability
and Oversight Committee



Restrictions on hospital visitation under Pandemic Orders

Questionnaire

Purpose of questionnaire

The Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee, as part of its functions issued under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, is conducting a review of the Pandemic (Visitors to Hospitals and Care Facilities) Orders (Nos. 1 to 5) and the Pandemic (Public Safety) Order.

The Committee has issued this questionnaire to all Victorian hospitals to understand how the Orders has been implemented and to identify any issues hospitals have experienced related to the Orders.

The Committee notes that as of 11.59 pm 22 April 2022, restrictions on hospital visitation (except for the requirement to wear masks) were revoked. However, the Committee still wishes to understand the experience your organisation has had with the Orders, including the implementation of previous orders. In particular, challenges faced in enforcing the Orders and managing exemption requests.

Please note, this information may be used and published by the Committee as part its reporting.

Response

Please provide a response to the questionnaire by **9 May 2022**.

The completed questionnaire should be sent to: pdaoc@parliament.vic.gov.au.

Questions

1. Has your organisation implemented visitor restrictions that are in excess of the restrictions detailed in the orders? If so, when did this occur and in what circumstances?

Visitors restrictions at Corryong Health were implemented as detailed in the orders.

2. Has your organisation received any complaints about visitor restrictions? If so, what were the outcomes of these?

Multiple complaints about restriction from consumers who could not access their family members in the hospital or in Residential aged care

- Complaint lodged with the Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission regarding visitors' restrictions. Resolved as Corryong Health was offering information to family's via email, phone, video contact, newsletters, photos,
- Occupation violence toward s staff relating to visitors' restrictions. CEO & DCSN followed up with letters and face to face meetings to explain the directives and explain that aggressive behaviour towards staff was not acceptable on under any circumstances
- Family members have threatened to harm staff and damage the organisation building. Staff supported, access to the facility was with drawn except for medical emergencies and police were contacted
- Incident reports submitted relating to verbal aggression
- Letter of complaint forwarded to the Victorian Premier, Daniel Andrews
- Letters of complaints regarding visitor restriction processed through the Compliments & Complaints system
- Family members sneaking into the facility

3. Have there been instances where your organisation has misinterpreted the restrictions under the orders (e.g., when orders have changed or through confusing language in the content of the orders)?

At times the directives were changed nearly on a daily basis it was hard to keep up with what was being implemented when.

As an MPS it was difficult to know what directives to follow and which directives to follow

We did the very best we could to follow the directives and at times went up the directives to keep our patients, residents, staff and the community safe.

Corryong is proud to say that there has not been a positive case of COVID within the facility within minimal number of staff furloughed

4. How many applications for visiting exemptions has your organisation received and how many been approved?

Nil

5. What staff member of your organisation has assessed applications for exemptions?
The NUM would assess exemption applications in consultation with the Infection Control co-ordinator

6. What steps were taken to inform all visitors and their relatives of visiting rules and capacity to apply for an exemption?

Steps taken to inform visitors of visiting rules and capacity to apply for an exemption:

- Face-book posts including Video's
- Signage around the facility
- Community newsletters
- Newsletters to resident's family's
- Phone to contact to each family as required
- Emails to resident's family's

7. What steps were taken to advise staff of the availability of the exemption process when dealing with the public and visitors to patients?

Steps taken to inform staff:

- Outbreak Management meetings: Monday's and Thursday afternoons which are attended by team leaders and the information fed down different department lines
- Bi-monthly Safer Care Corryong Health Newsletter
- Memo's
- Emails form team leaders
- Tabled at team meetings
- Verbal communication
- Placed on handover sheets: Information passed on from shift to shift

8. What was your overall impression of the system, and could it have been improved?

- Under the COVID 19 circumstances DHHS did the best they could given the speed at which COVID 19 was changing
- Consistency of information and expectations between different department would help