



**VALMAR**  
*Linking Community*

ABN 38 060 125 340

75 Capper Street

(PO Box 433)

Tumut NSW 2720

**Phone: 02 6947 4150**

Fax: 02 6947 3989

Email: [ceo@valmar.com.au](mailto:ceo@valmar.com.au)

Dear Valmar Client/Guardian/Family member/Decision Maker

As you would all be aware, the Covid-19 (CV) situation is rapidly changing worldwide, including Australia. Therefore, Valmar is responding in a rapidly and evolving manner and as always, the health and wellbeing of our clients and staff are of paramount concern in any strategy, decisions or changes we make.

I am writing to keep you as informed as possible as to what we are doing and to pass on some of the changes we implemented effective from Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> March. So in no particular order..... and effective immediately, the following now will apply at Valmar....

**We have cancelled or postponed all non-essential meetings and training:**

Most meetings and training will now be delivered through an alternative format. For Service Level meetings, alternative avenues such as email communications, teleconferences or delaying the meetings are being implemented. As much as possible contact with Guardians and families will be by phone or email.

**The Government has enforced 14 days quarantine on all travelers from overseas:**

Up until the 16<sup>th</sup> March, Valmar had requested 14 days quarantine from staff returning from specific overseas locations, but now this has been superseded by this Government directive. A staff person now returning from anywhere overseas will not be rostered on for the full 14 days after they return.

**The Government has advised all Australians to not travel overseas:**

Valmar likewise is advising our clients and staff to not travel overseas, and making them aware that if they do, they may have significant difficulties and delays in returning to Australia and Valmar.

**Seriously upgrading all handwashing for staff, clients and visitors, including training and resource materials:**

This speaks for itself and as simple as it sounds, it might be the single best preventative measure.

**Scale back Community Transport bus trips and limit to essential ones only:**

Social event trips are now no longer available, however Doctors and shopping for example will continue to proceed.....at this stage.

**Introducing declarations of fitness in some service areas and this will extend rapidly to others:**

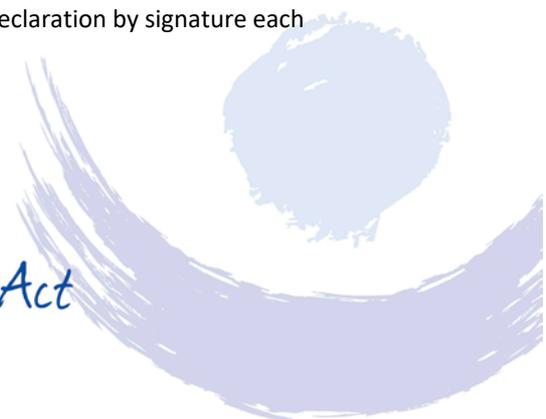
Our Human Resource (HR) department is working on developing a standardised form to make this as easy as possible. This will be used daily for all staff and all clients. I hope to have it introduced within a few days and ask for your cooperation and understanding in making this declaration by signature each day.



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**Moving one of the Human Resource /Quality Assurance Team into CV Practice Compliance as their primary role immediately:**

Lyn Walker has now commenced in this role and is circulating resource information as it comes to hand. This way we are ensuring we have the most up to date and to the hour advice and directions, and provides us with a checking mechanism internally to ensure services are following the Government and Valmar CV requirements.

**Purchased bulk orders of toilet paper and hand sanitiser:**

All of our internal services are able to rest easy knowing that if they are unable to source these essentials from the community (such as in a group home situation) Valmar Head Office will have a supply on hand, or at worst only a few days away.

**Cancelled our services attending large external events and reducing attendance at smaller events:**

The Government has ruled out any event with 100 or more persons present and Valmar have taken a tighter response in that we are ruling out smaller events and gatherings, with all services striving to ensure we apply Social Distancing as far as possible in relation to all events and activities.

**Introduced an enhanced range of hard surface cleaning/disinfecting measures:**

The virus survives well on hard surfaces, and so the more often these are disinfected the better. We are working to ensure that this rapidly becomes a repeated and routine activity into each Valmar location and vehicle from this point on.

**Ensuring that all essential payroll, Human Resources, Information Technology, NDIS Claiming and accounts functions can operate effectively through Home-Based work if or when required:**

Valmar will not close our Administration Offices unless this is necessary or mandated by Government, however we do need to ensure that the key administrative functions required to keep our staff working and providing our support services can continue, for whatever happens down the track. To do this each administration staff person is being required to trial or "road test" working from home for a day or two at a time that works best for them over the next few days or weeks. Through this process we will be able to have in place the capability to quickly and fully close our administration offices and keep the organisation running remotely.

**Each Group house is now steadily increasing their store of useful lockdown provisions:**

Additionally, our Meals on Wheels Kitchen is steadily increasing its store of frozen meals.



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**Our staff are using gloves and all PPE everywhere they are needed:**

Face Masks are really only effective to stop people who have the virus spreading it to others, so at this stage they are not being mandated. We are keeping a close watch on advice relating to this.

At this stage Valmar is not closing any Centre-based Group Activities, but if the Government advise or enforce this, or if we have reason to deem these to be too high risk to continue, this may occur in the future:

The Commonwealth Government have advised us to anticipate and prepare for over 30% staff absenteeism rates due to illness, quarantine and isolation, all staff have been made aware that requests for annual or long service leave in the coming weeks and possibly months, will have to be critically analyzed and assessed in light of our ongoing client support needs, and requests for leave may be declined. This is not something we do lightly, and only as a measure to ensure continuity of service/support.

No doubt there will be further updates in the days, weeks and months ahead, so please check your emails regularly, and if you have any questions, send them through to [Lynettewalker@valmar.com.au](mailto:Lynettewalker@valmar.com.au)

I thank you all in advance for your understanding and assistance through this completely unique situation.

**Hugh Packard**  
Chief Executive Officer



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