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Guiding Principles for Residential Aged Care - Single Site and DHHS PSRAC position

In response to the COVID-19 situation in Victoria, a range of measures have been put in place to limit the risk of outbreaks in residential aged care facilities. This includes single site workforce arrangements to limit workers of residential aged care facilities from working across multiple sites. There are different arrangements for private and public service residential aged care facilities.

Commonwealth funded Residential Aged Care including non-government residential aged care facilities.

The Industry-led *Guiding Principles for Residential Aged Care – Keeping Victorian Residents and Workers Safe (Principles)* were initially developed in response to the second wave COVID-19 outbreak in Melbourne and Mitchell Shire in July 2020. The voluntary Principles were originally in place in the declared hotspots of Melbourne and Mitchell Shire from 27 July 2020 to 30 November 2020, on advice from the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer. The Principles are designed to support aged care workers to be based at one residential aged care facility to minimise the risk of COVID-19 being unintentionally transmitted across residential aged care facilities.

The Principles have been localised and reapplied in other states in response to further COVID-19 outbreaks, where the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer has declared areas to be a hotspot or high risk location. In late December 2020, the Commonwealth Department of Health identified six Melbourne suburbs which were declared ‘high risk’ locations based on advice from the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer and single site workforce arrangements, underpinned by the Principles, were re-introduced from 31 December 2020 to 29 January 2021. Additionally, local government areas in Greater Melbourne were declared hotspots for an initial period from 13 February 2021 to 17 February 2021.

The Commonwealth Government has made grant funding under the Support for Aged Care Workers in COVID-19 Grant Opportunity (SACWIC) available to ensure workers impacted by the single site arrangements are not disadvantaged. Providers located in designated hotspots or high risk locations can claim funding for the relevant grant activity period. Applications will remain open until 30 June 2021.

Information on the available funding and the grant opportunity guidelines can be found at [Support for Aged Care Workers in COVID-19 \(GO4215\) Program](#).

Victorian Public Service Residential Aged Care Facilities

The Victorian Government implemented a funding scheme that complements and adopts the major principles of the Industry led *Guiding Principles for Residential Aged Care – Keeping Victorian Residents and Workers Safe*, but with specific application for Victorian Public Sector Residential Aged Care Services (PSRACS).

Whereas Commonwealth funding support is limited to hotspot locations, the Victorian Government funding scheme is available to all Victorian PSRACS.

The funding has been used to incentivise PSRACS and their staff to limit the mobility of the workforce to a single employer, and to ensure workers were not financially impacted.

On 19 September 2020, the Victorian Government announced an extension of the funding scheme for PSRACS until the end of February 2021. In early February the Victorian Government extended single site engagement in PSRACS until 30 June 2021.

The announcements regarding DHHS PSRACS do not apply to non-government RACFs who operate under the Guiding Principles. We are aware some staff have transferred from PSRAC to a primary employer in the non-government sector. These staff are advised to work closely with both employers to determine their eligibility for support for continued single site engagement.