



From the Chief Operating Officer

Craig Smith

Warrigal

A world where older people
feel known, loved,
and connected.

3 October 2025

Dear resident representatives and relatives,

Welcome to the October update. This is a significant month as we celebrate our Nepalese staff during the Festival of Lights (October 18-23), hold our Annual General Meeting where the Board will elect a new Chair, and finalise preparations for the landmark new Aged Care Act commencing 1 November 2025.

This month:

- Welcome to Warrigal - New residents joining our community
- Health and Safety Updates
- New Aged Care Act and the role of Registered Supporters
- Voluntary Assisted Dying - ACT
- Medication Management System
- Ministerial Visit

Welcome to Warrigal

I would like to begin by extending a warm welcome to the 41 new residents who joined Warrigal in September. I hope the transition into your new home has been smooth and welcoming. Thank you for choosing to live at Warrigal.

Health and Safety Updates

During September, we experienced no COVID-19 outbreak across Warrigal. Nationally, at the end of September, there are currently 57 outbreaks reported in Residential Aged Care Homes, which is a reduction from the previous month, where there were 100 outbreaks.

New Aged Care Act and the role of Registered Supporters

The Aged Care Act 2024 will start on 1 November 2025. Over the past 12 months, the work undertaken to implement the changes has been communicated regularly in these updates to prepare residents and families for the arrival of this 'rights-based' Act.

One of the key changes is embedding supported decision making to help residents and customers have greater control over decisions. The Act creates the role of a **registered supporter** to assist older people in the decision-making process, including requesting information to assist the resident in making informed decisions, helping them understand options and communicating preferences and choices.

It is important to understand that a registered supporter may hold power under state or territory law such as an enduring power of attorney or guardian but registering as a supporter does not automatically grant decision making powers. There can be more than one registered supporter who can be family, friends, carers, or advocates with the objective of helping someone decide, and not deciding for them.

Additional Service Fees

Additional Service Fees (ASF) are extra charges that most of our residential aged care homes charge residents to pay for services that are not specified in the Aged Care Act. This will be changing from 1 November 2025, with Additional Service Fees (ASF) being replaced by Higher Everyday Living Fees (HELFF).

At the same time, a 2% annual retention on the Refundable Accommodation Deposit (RAD) will commence (capped at a maximum of 10%). To access the full complement of premium services currently provided under ASF, new residents will need to contribute to both HELFF and the RAD retention.

The Government has provided a 12-month transition period for current residents, with no immediate changes to your care. Communication from the Government and services about the transition to HELFF will take place between August and September 2026. Additionally, Warrigal will be sending specific updates about these changes next week. Please keep an eye out for this information.

Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)

The Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2024 will come into effect in the ACT from 3 November 2025, providing eligible people with an additional end-of-life option. This service has been available in NSW since November 2023, and Warrigal has a policy and process in place. While there are some differences in the respective legislation, the philosophy is identical. To be eligible to access VAD in the ACT, a person must:

- Have an advanced and progressive medical condition that will cause their death and is causing them intolerable suffering.
- Have decision making capacity in relation to voluntary assisted dying at all stages through the process.
- Make their decision to access voluntary assisted dying voluntarily and without coercion.

There are obligations that we have as an aged care provider that include:

- Giving a resident who asks about VAD the contact details for the VAD CNS in writing within 2 business days.
- Giving an employee of the VAD CNS or other relevant official reasonable access to the resident who asks about voluntary assisted dying at the care home if the resident consents.
- Identify if there are any staff or health practitioners who may be conscientious objectors to voluntary assisted dying, so they do not have to be involved in the process, but they must not stop a person from accessing information regarding the process.

Please be assured that there will be training provided to staff, and if you have any concerns or enquiries, please reach out to your local management team.

Medication Management System

Warrigal was advised on 26 September that the Telstra Health electronic medication management system used at all Residential Care Homes, except for Calwell and Stirling, will no longer be listed on the Australian Digital Health Agency's electronic National Residential Medication Chart Transitional Conformance Register from 17 October 2025.

Following this notification, we have taken immediate action. We have contacted Telstra Health to understand the timeframe required for them to become conformant, and we are actively investigating alternative systems to ensure continuity of best practice.

From 17 October, we will be reverting to the paper-based prescription process that was successfully used prior to the electronic medication system being gradually implemented over the past 12 months. We have advised all Allied Health Professionals who prescribe medications and Pharmacists of this change.

While this was outside of our control and will impact many providers across Australia, we are confident in our ability to maintain safe and effective medication management for all residents.

Ministerial Visit

On 15 September, the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors, The Hon Sam Rae, along with local MPs Alison Byrne and Carol Berry met with representatives from Warrigal along with other aged care providers at Warrigal Coniston. It was a wonderful opportunity to not only discuss the challenges facing the sector but also to focus on solutions to ease the pressure on the number of people waiting for a bed in a residential care home and those waiting to be assessed for a Home Care Package.

I sincerely wish to thank all residents and relatives for supporting Warrigal. As always if you have any feedback, please contact me by emailing warrigal@warrigal.com.au.

Yours Sincerely,



Craig Smith
Chief of Operations