

Allowing visitors back into care homes? Risks and risk reduction

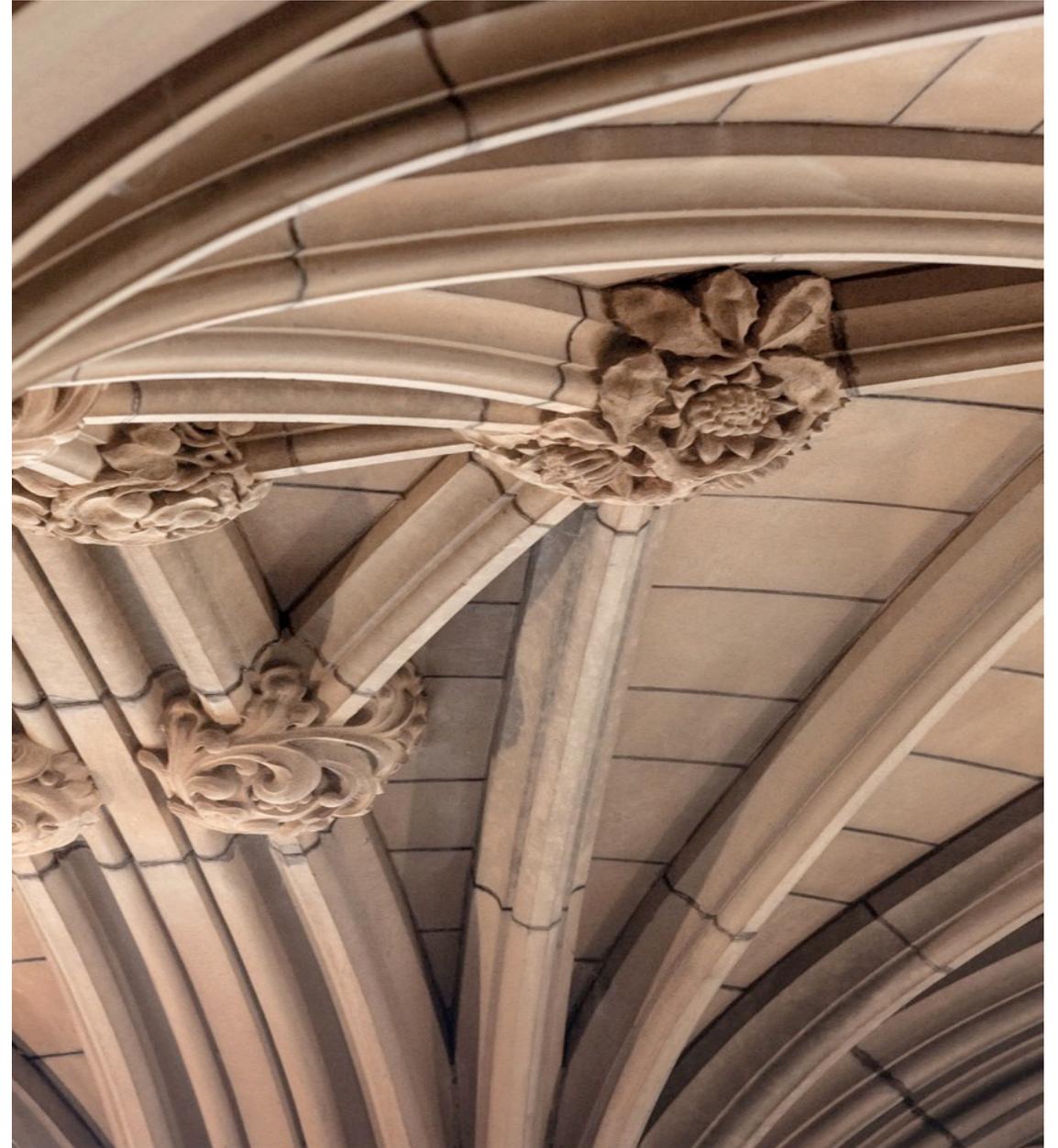
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY





Rationale behind care home lockdowns

- Once COVID-19 enters a care home, it is difficult to prevent spread
- Mortality is high
Case fatality rate of 26-29%
estimated from Canadian data



Hsu AT, Lane NE, Sinha SK, Dunning J, Dhuper M, Kahiel Z, Sveistrup H. Report: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on residents of Canada's long-term care homes — ongoing challenges and policy responses.

Rationale behind care home lockdowns

A screenshot of a New York Times article. The background is a dark, nighttime photograph of a large, multi-story building, likely a nursing home, with some windows illuminated. The article title is in a large, white, serif font. Below the title is a sub-headline in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The background image shows a dark, multi-story building at night, with some windows lit up. In the foreground, there are several windows with blinds, some of which are open, showing a glimpse of the interior. The overall mood is somber and isolated.

☰ 🔍

The New York Times

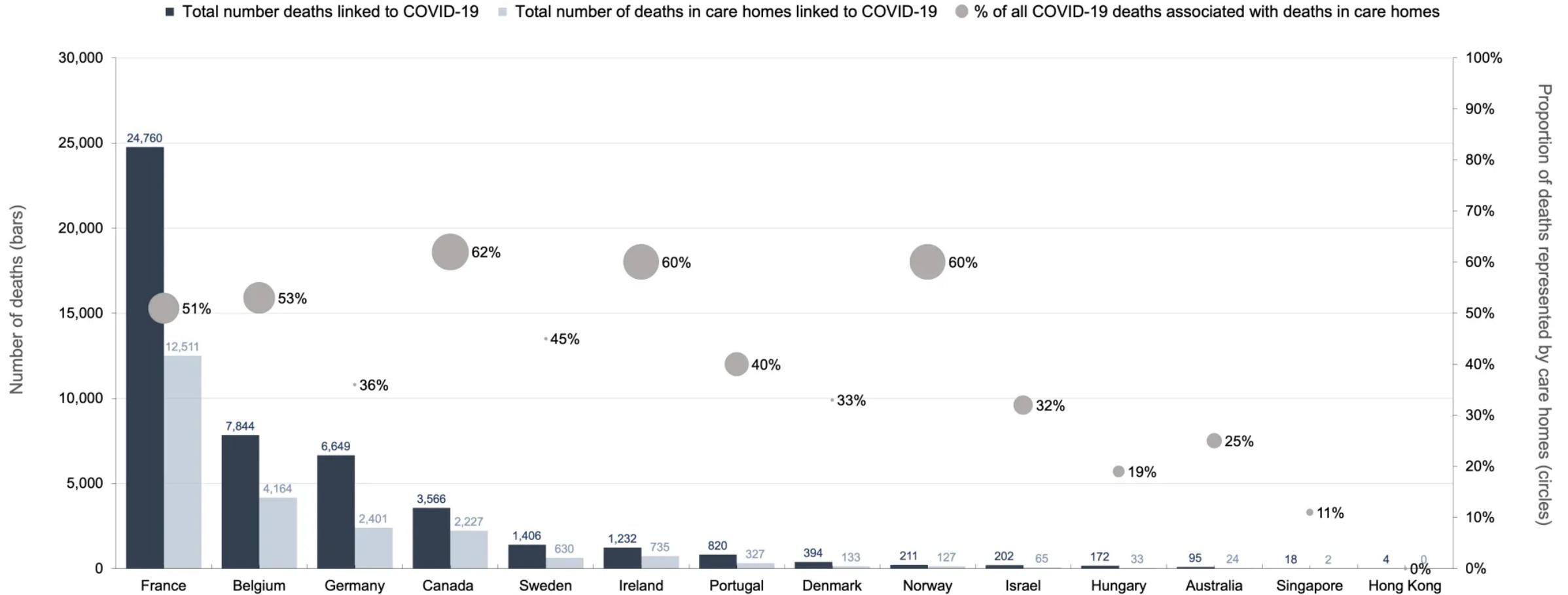
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Nursing Homes Becoming Islands of Isolation Amid 'Shocking' Mortality Rate

With the deaths of 18 residents in a single nursing home amid a coronavirus outbreak in Washington State, industry leaders recommend strict limits on visits at nursing homes across the country.



Despite lockdowns, COVID-related deaths among care home residents very high



Comas-Herrera, A., J. Zalakain, C. Litwin, A. Hsu, N. Lane and J.-L. Fernandez (2020). Mortality associated with COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes: early international evidence., LTCcovid.org, International Long Term Care Policy Network, CPEC-LSE.



INTERNATIONAL
LONG TERM CARE
POLICY NETWORK

International examples of measures to prevent and manage COVID-19 outbreaks in residential care and nursing home settings

Adelina Comas-Herrera, Elizabeth C. Ashcroft and Klara Lorenz-Dant

Last updated 11 May 2020

Unintended consequences of lockdowns for residents

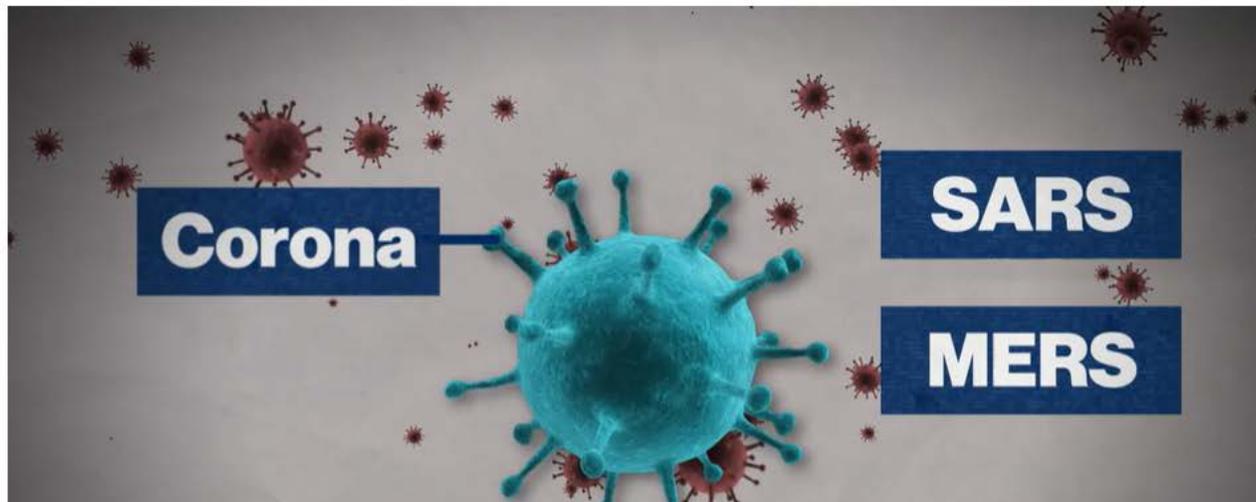


COVID-19's hidden victims, Alzheimer's patients in nursing homes

Nearly 50% of all nursing home residents live with Alzheimer's or dementia.

By Jack Arnholtz

16 May 2020, 23:12 • 11 min read



- Loneliness
- Boredom
- Loss of physical and cognitive function?
- Increase in behaviours? suggesting unmet needs
- Increase in physical and chemical restraint?

Consequences of lockdowns for staff

UK news

This article is more than 1 month old

UK care home staff 'at breaking point' as coronavirus cases rise

Care workers and homes report insufficient PPE and lack of clear government guidance

- [Coronavirus - latest updates](#)
- [See all our coronavirus coverage](#)

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Wed 1 Apr 2020 06.40 AEDT



3503



Increase in staff workload



The debate on allowing visitors into homes again

THE  TIMES

Log in

CORONAVIRUS

Ban visitors to protect the elderly, says care homes chief

Helen Puttick

Friday March 13 2020, 12.01am
GMT, The Times



The debate on allowing visitors into homes again

NATIONAL CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

OPINION

When aged care residents stop eating: blanket visitor bans a dangerous overreach

For our free coronavirus pandemic coverage, [learn more here](#).

By **Bethany Brown and Kim Samuel**

April 8, 2020 – 11.35am



Every day for more than two years, Mae* has brought breakfast and dinner to her 75-year-old husband, Dean*, in his aged care facility in their town in northern Queensland. Dean has dementia and Mae sits with him for hours, encouraging him to eat each bite. It's a time-consuming process born of love, and something harried care workers cannot do, short-staffed as they are.

The debate on allowing visitors into homes again

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With no visitors or unannounced inspections, who knows what is happening in nursing homes during the coronavirus lockdown?

7.30 By Anne Connolly and John Stewart, ABC Investigations

Updated 2 Apr 2020, 11:13pm



POLITICS

Scott Morrison issues warning to aged care facilities to allow visitors or Commonwealth will get involved

By political reporter Georgia Hitch

Posted 24 Apr 2020, updated 24 Apr 2020



The debate on allowing visitors into homes again

Aged care homes lift coronavirus lockdowns for families on 'Mother's weekend'

By Claire Moodie

Posted 9 May 2020, updated 10 May 2020



[abc.net.au/news/2020-04-23/aged-care-providers-defend-coronavirus-lockdown-amid-criticism/12177096](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-04-23/aged-care-providers-defend-coronavirus-lockdown-amid-criticism/12177096)

Aged care operators defend coronavirus lockdown as Premier, Prime Minister urge facilities to relax visit bans

By Claire Moodie

Posted 23 Apr 2020, updated 23 Apr 2020



The debate on allowing visitors into homes again

INDUSTRY CODE FOR VISITING RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE HOMES DURING COVID-19

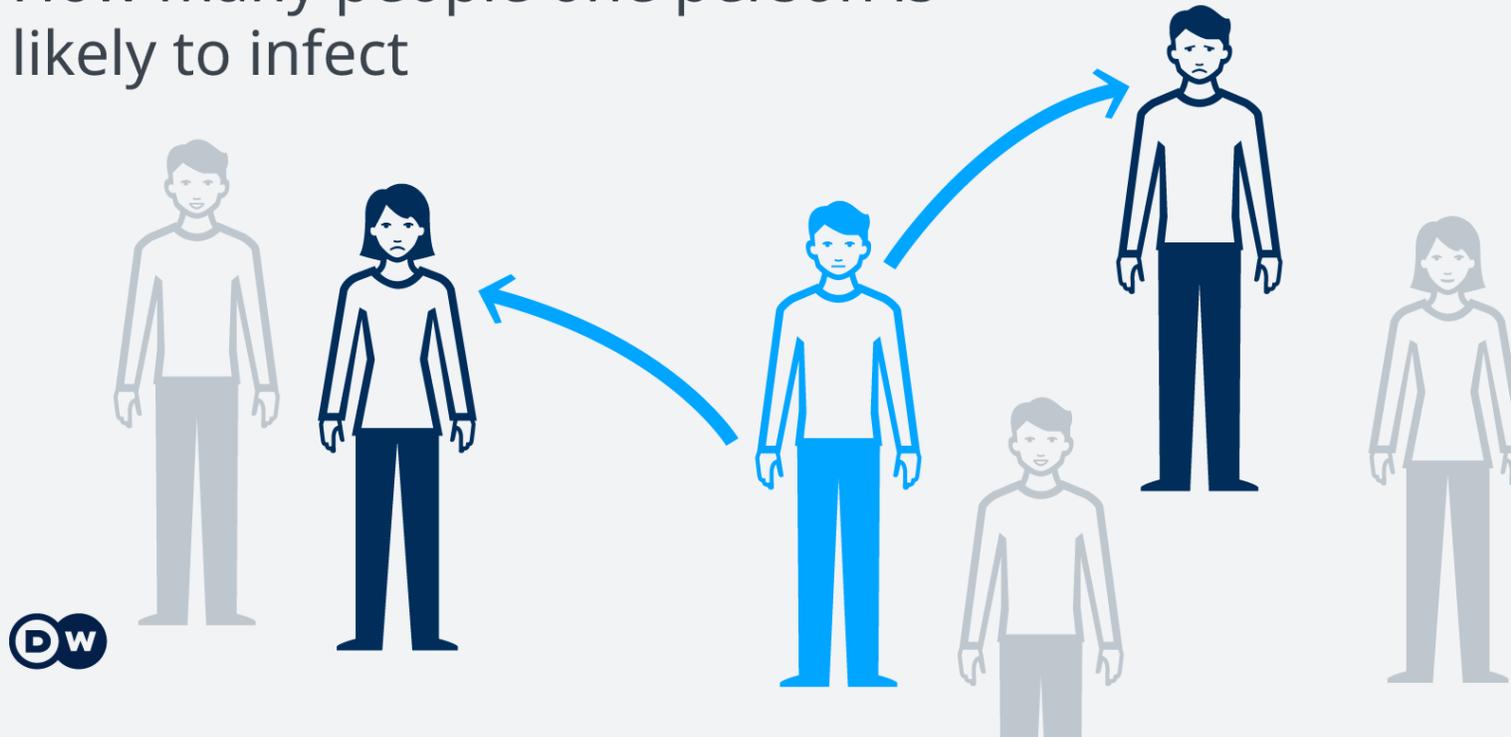


<https://www.cota.org.au/policy/aged-care-reform/agedcarevisitors/>

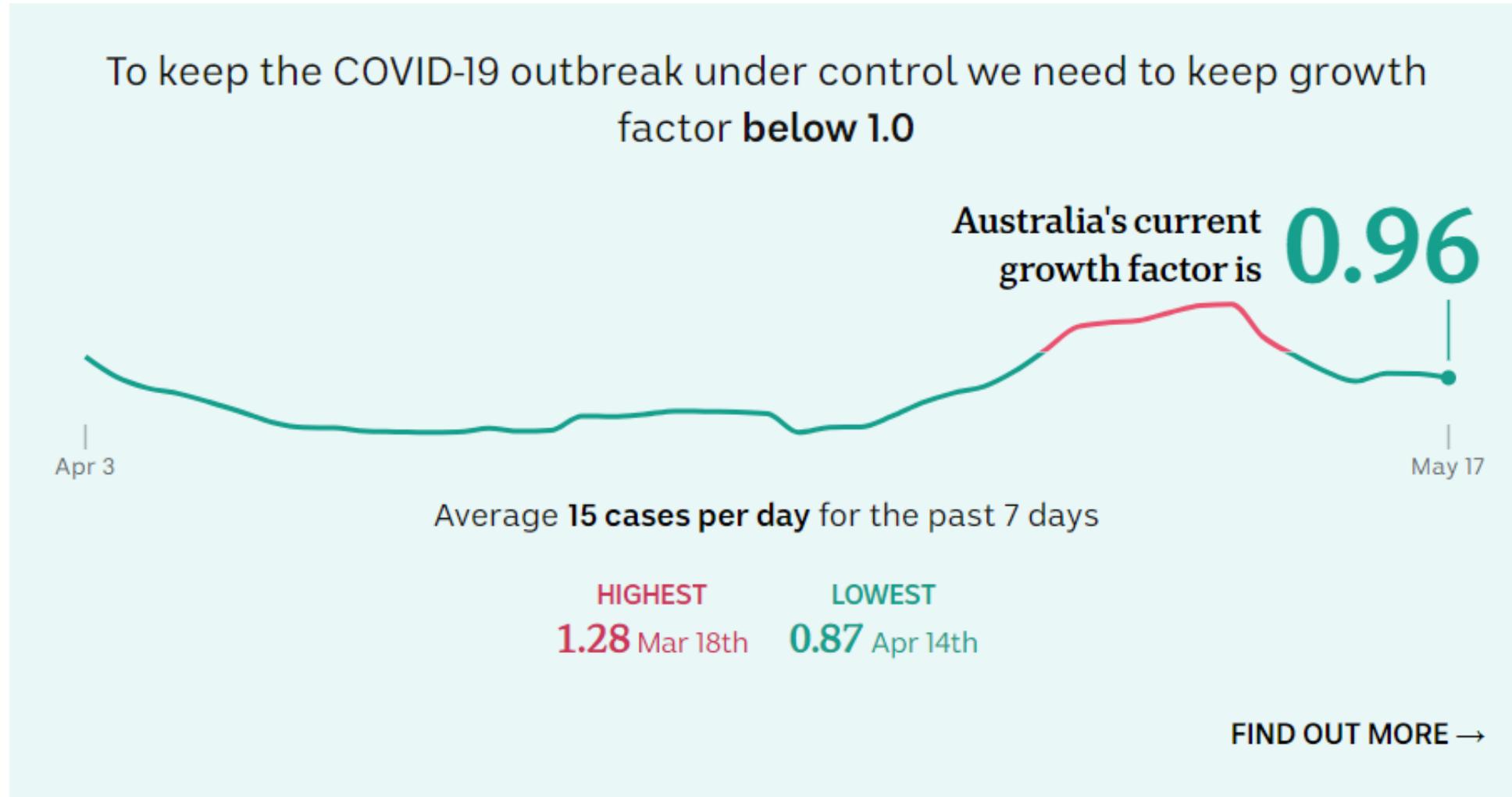
When is it safe to allow visitors?

Basic reproduction number

How many people one person is likely to infect

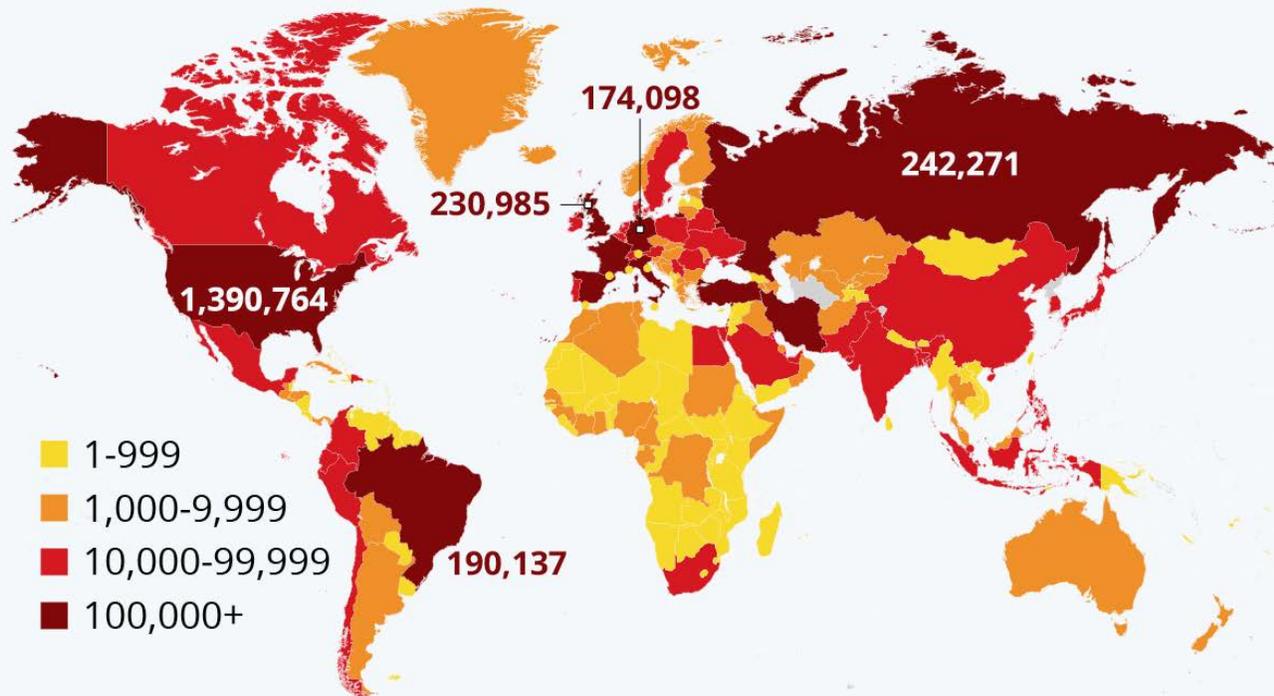


When is it safe to allow visitors?



The Virus That Has Enveloped the World

Locations by number of confirmed COVID-19 cases



Hong Kong and Macau included in China figure

As of May 14, 2020 at 2:30 a.m. EST

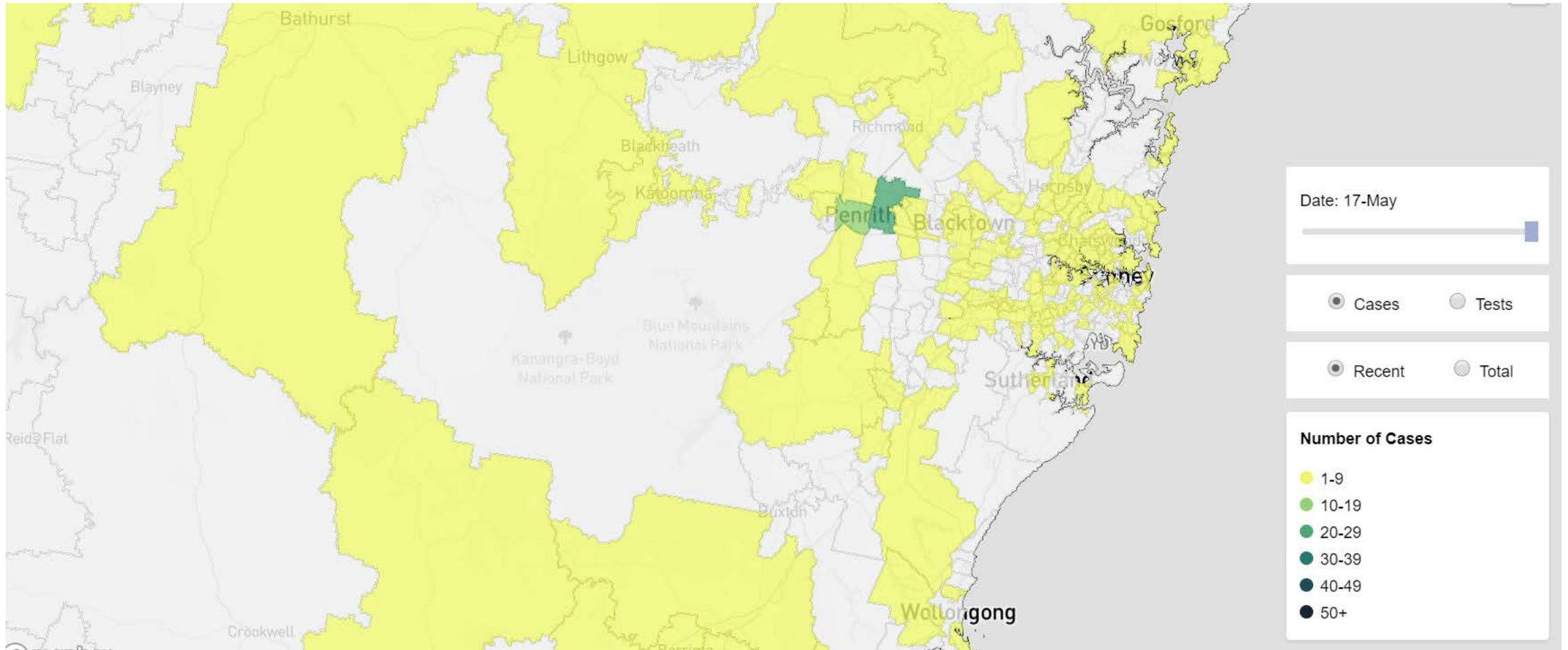
Source: Johns Hopkins CSSE



statista

Reproduction number is not related to prevalence

Prevalence of active cases in region



Safer visits

COVID-19

VISITOR POLICY



Message from the Chief Executive

We need your help

To help us protect you, our patients and our staff we are trying to limit visitors to our hospitals.

We ask that patients only invite one visitor at any time, any where in this hospital.

Please avoid bringing children under 12 years of age to the hospital.

Please wash your hands or use the hand sanitiser provided when you enter and when you leave.

If you are unwell with fever or cough or flu symptoms or if you have travelled overseas in the last 14 days, please do not enter this hospital.

If you need urgent medical assistance please go to the Emergency Department or see your GP.

Thank you for your understanding and help in keeping our community healthy.

Jill Ludford
Chief Executive
Murrumbidgee Local Health District



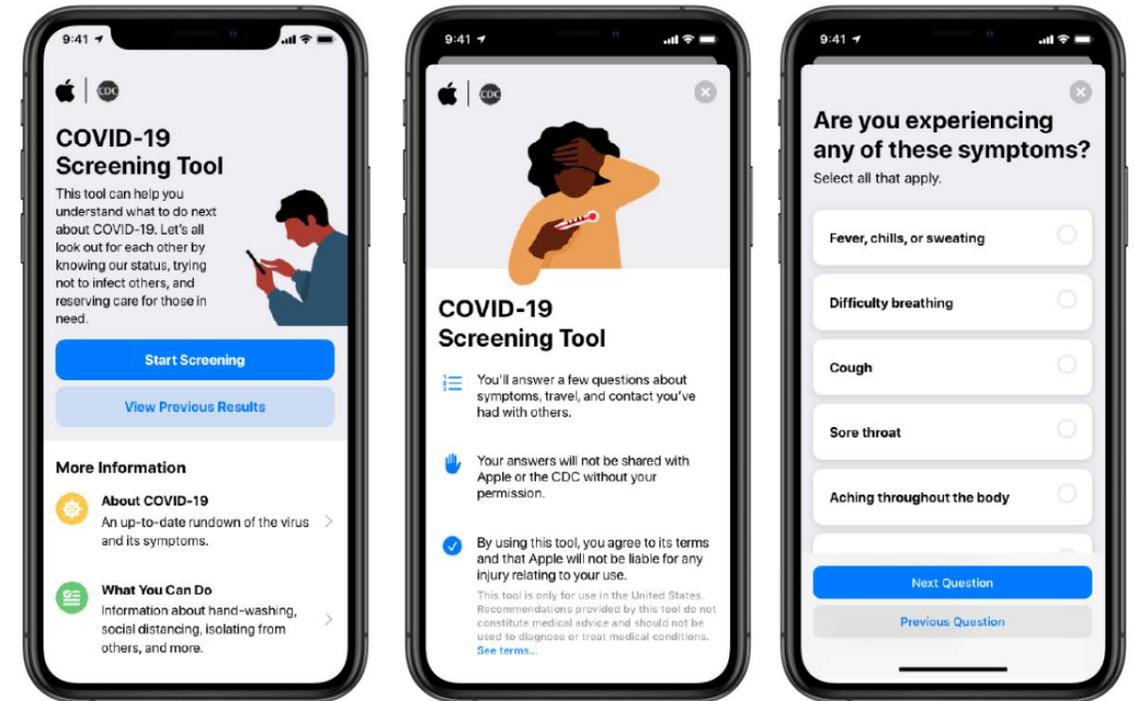
Limits on the number of visitors and visits

- Limiting the visitors a resident can receive at any one time
- Limiting the number of different visitors a resident can receive a week
- Limiting the length and number of visitors a resident can receive a week
- Limiting the number of visitors in the care home at any one time
- Not allowing children under 16 years to visit

Safer visits

Screening of visitors

- Requiring visitors to not live, work or have spent time in last two weeks in COVID-19 geographical hotspots as defined by government data
- Requiring visitors to have had flu vaccinations
- Requiring visitors to have a temperature check before the visit
- Requiring visitors to complete a symptom and travel checklist before the visit to ensure they have not experienced symptoms in last weeks
- Registering visitors to facilitate contact tracing if needed



Safer visits



Conditions during the visit

- Handwashing by visitor on entering and leaving the facility
- Visits in outdoor area or well-ventilated private rooms
- Minimising time by visitors walking through other parts of the facility
- Maintaining spatial distancing (could be made clearer by marking zones on the floor)
- Wearing of masks and shoe protection by the visitor and resident if possible

Allowing some visitors won't mitigate effects of other restrictions



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AGED CARE DURING COVID-19



1 UPGRADE TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT FOR STAFF AND RESIDENTS



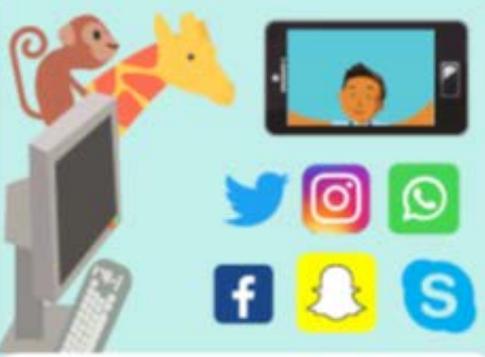
2 INCREASE STAFFING LEVELS TO SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY USE AND ADOPTION



3 PROMOTE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN RESIDENTS WHILST OBSERVING SPATIAL DISTANCE REGULATIONS WITHIN FACILITIES



4 SUPPORT FREQUENT COMMUNICATION, INCLUDING TELEPHONE CALLS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

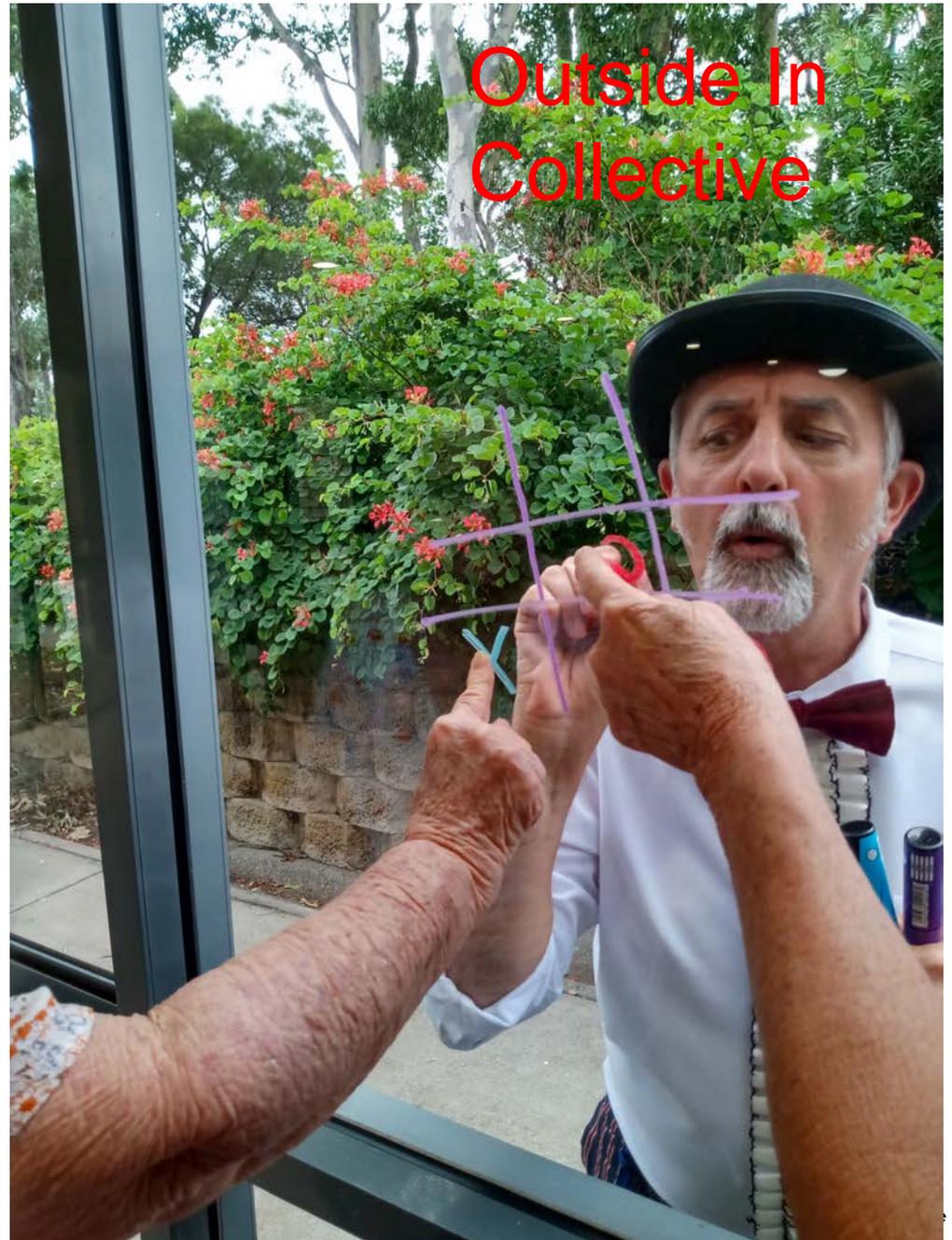


5 PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA, NETWORKING SITES AND ONLINE STREAMS FOR RESIDENTS



6 SUPPORT TELEMEDICINE BETWEEN HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS COVERING MENTAL AND PHYSICAL NEEDS OF RESIDENTS.





The University of Sydney
Maurie Voisey-Barlin, Andy McDonnell

Something that would really help



What do we still need to know?

- What regional prevalence and R number might be judged safe for family visitors?
- What do residents want and need during restrictions?
- How do we maintain resident health and wellbeing?
- How do we support staff?
- How will additional resources be funded?
- How do care home regulators ensure quality care during restrictions?
- What might stage 2 easing look like?
- When might residents be able to go out into the community again?



Thank you and discussion