

My adult son has complex needs. He lives in a group home under the updated guidelines allowing groups of 10 people to gather. Can he come to visit me at my lifestyle village?

The risk of serious illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) increases for people with complex needs and older members of the population. Particularly those with other serious health conditions or a weakened immune system.

The Australian Government has put restrictions in place to protect residents and workers in residential aged care facilities, see the fact sheet [Advice for Retirement Villages](#). The disability service organisation that supports your son will also have very similar guidelines.

When arranging a visit consider if either of you have:

- returned from overseas in the last 14 days;
- been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days;
- have a fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (such as a cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath);
- have an up to date (ie 2020) influenza vaccination.

If the lifestyle village accepts visitors, the current restrictions will likely mean changes in the way you go about your visit. Ask the village manager if you are unsure.

These restrictions could include:

- limiting visits to a short duration;
- limiting visitors to a maximum of two visitors at one time per day, such as your son and support worker;

- conducting visits in your unit if the required social distancing can be adhered to, outdoors or in a specific area designated by the facility, rather than in a communal area where the risk of transmission to other residents is greater; or
- showing evidence that your son and support worker have received the 2020 influenza vaccination.

The general advice from the government is if you or your son are at risk and do not absolutely have to visit, please do not. Consider alternative ways to stay in contact, such as via phone and video calls, send postcards, photos or artwork, or film short videos to share.

Please remember that these restrictions will not last forever, but they are there to protect the most vulnerable members of our communities.

References:

Australian Government Department of Health (2020). [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information for families and residents on restricted visits to residential aged care facilities](#)

Australian Government Department of Health (2020). [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Advice for Retirement Villages.](#)

Lanen Greta. (4 May 2020). Drawings Bring Joy to Aged Care Homes. [Colac Herald.](#)