



## **COVID-19 (coronavirus) update – 16 March 2020**

Dear colleagues,

Over the past 24 hours there have been a number of new developments in relation to Metro North's response to COVID-19. These include:

- Metro North COVID-19 Community Assessment Clinic opens
- Virtual ward admits first patients
- Change to Self-quarantine restrictions for travellers
- PPE and Consumables

### **Metro North COVID-19 Community Assessment Clinic opens**

In response to community demand, Metro North has officially opened a dedicated Community Assessment Clinic at Brighton Health Campus. This clinic is easily accessible to our community and is for people who meet the epidemiological criteria of travel overseas or close contact with a confirmed case in the past 14 days and have mild to moderate symptoms such as a sore throat or cough, with or without fever.

The clinic is located at 449 Hornibrook Highway, Brighton and is open 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week for assessment and testing if required.

This is in addition to the four Hospital Based clinics that are in place, one at each of our major hospitals.

### **Virtual Ward admits first patients**

Metro North has now welcomed their first patients to the 'Virtual Ward' model and today have successfully admitted 11 patients to the unique initiative. The Virtual Ward allows eligible, mildly symptomatic patients to receive the care they need while recovering from COVID-19 in the comfort of their own home.

Leveraging our HITH and PACS models of care alongside digital and telehealth platforms, the model is designed to provide world-class care to our patients while also easing the load on our busy hospitals. Expanding this capability in the coming days will ensure that we reserve our hospital beds for those that need them most.

### **Self-quarantine restrictions for travellers**

Following on from the new requirement for incoming international travellers to self-quarantine for 14 days, it is timely to remind all staff that even if a traveller develops symptoms, is tested for COVID-19 and receives a negative result, they are still required to self-quarantine for 14 days after departure from their international destination.

This is an essential measure to ensure the health and safety of our community and colleagues.

If this applies to you, please work with your Line Manager and Executive Director to make appropriate arrangements.

### **PPE and consumables**

As our hospitals get busier and busier with our response to COVID-19, please remember that PPE is a vitally valuable resource that must be used conservatively and correctly.

If you have not yet read Queensland Health's guidelines in relation [to General Considerations for Conserving PPE](#) and [Metro North's Guidance For PPE Use](#), I urge you to familiarise yourself with these resources at your earliest convenience.

Please remember that these are finite resources and that access to them is essential for us to treat our community and to keep ourselves safe. This means ensuring only essential staff are within high use areas including operating theatres, cardiac catheter theatres or day surgery suites.

Thank you for your assistance and dedication as we continue to ramp up our response to COVID-19. Our community is counting on you to continue delivering the world class healthcare we are known for.

Kind regards,

**Dr Liz Rushbrook**

Metro North Health Incident Controller