



COVID-19 (coronavirus) update – 20 March 2020

Dear colleagues,

In today's update I would like to address the following:

- Social distancing
- Election voting advice
- Leave provisions update

Social distancing

As an organisation, it is essential that we 'walk the talk' and adhere to social distancing guidelines at all times. We must take this seriously and we must act now. I urge you all to review and check that social distancing is possible across all patient and staff areas - including facility waiting rooms, treatment queues, staff rooms, meeting rooms etc.

Non-critical group meetings should happen via Microsoft Teams or teleconference, and if you must meet in person, please ensure you are 1.5 metres away from your colleagues at all times. If you walk into a meeting room and realise that social distancing is not possible, please ask some members of the meeting to leave and dial in via teleconference.

This guidance has been brought into place to ensure we keep our fellow Australians safe, especially elderly or vulnerable people. Exemplar modelling by each of us is the right thing to do.

Election voting advice

Queensland's next local government election will proceed on Saturday 28 March 2020. The Electoral Commission of Queensland has put a range of measures in place to comply with social distancing guidance. Many of you have had questions about how people in home isolation should submit their vote. The Electoral Commission of Queensland have clarified that people in home quarantine or isolation should call the Electoral Commission of Queensland on 1300 912 782 to advise of their circumstances and register for a telephone vote.

Leave provisions update

Today, we received the directive that 'Employment Arrangements in the Event of a Health Pandemic' has now been applied to health service employees. This includes a provision for special pandemic leave for eligible employees in specific circumstances, where alternative leave provisions are not available.

Metro North Workforce Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Leave Provisions Fact Sheet are being updated to reflect these provisions and you will be able to access these updates through the HR link on the Metro North COVID-19 Intranet page. If you have

further questions, please contact the Metro North HR team directly on 3647 2819 or by email metronorthhr@health.qld.gov.au.

It's easy to get caught up in the media hype when it surrounds us everywhere we go. I want to remind you to make sure you are receiving your information from legitimate sources such as the [Metro North QHEPS page](#), [Queensland Health](#), [Australian Government Department of Health](#) and [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). Please ensure the information you are consuming is verified and avoid spreading misleading articles via social media or other platforms. As healthcare workers, your family and friends are relying on you to provide the facts. Please play your part.

Kind regards,

Dr Liz Rushbrook

Metro North Health Incident Controller