



COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Metro North Hospital and Health Service - Putting people first



Message from the Executive Director

MEDICAL SERVICES

Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook

Dear colleagues,

The COVID-19 outbreak continues to develop rapidly. The role of Metro North's EOC is to ensure we are all prepared, well-resourced and ready for what lies ahead. Today I'd like to provide some important information about:

- All things PPE
- Vulnerable staff guidance

All things PPE

You would be aware of many levels of action and conversation in the area of Personal Protective Equipment use and availability in relation to the COVID-19 situation. The nature of this event has seen unprecedented periodic and sustained pressure on this important resource. This is being felt within Australia, within Queensland and across Metro North.

I would like to firstly assure you that we take your health and safety seriously. Ensuring that you are all aware of the PPE requirements for each point of healthcare, that we have an endorsed, transparent HHS wide approach and that you have all refreshed your training and familiarity with PPE donning and doffing procedures is our highest priority.

PPE & Hand hygiene stock levels – monitoring and access. Over the past two months we have developed increased monitoring of PPE stock levels through all of our clinical units and directorates. We have supported expansion of local centralised management processes, and put in place a HHS wide support and prioritisation resource across 105 critical PPE and hand hygiene stock items.

This ensures we have good visibility of usage rates to inform resupply requirements and plans that dovetail into the Statewide warehouse and supply system.

Unfortunately, we have also needed to increase security for these supplies at the local level as there has been some isolated breaches of security of this valuable resource by individuals. Please be cognisant of the balance that we are seeking to achieve to ensure PPE is freely available for appropriate use by our staff when clinically required, but is not misused, hoarded or misappropriated.

PPE use. There is a wide range of information on our [website](#) to guide the appropriate selection of PPE in general and dedicated COVID-19 clinical spaces. I would like to stress that with proper use of available PPE, together with excellent application of universal precautions we can keep ourselves, our colleagues and our patients safe.

There has been a wide range of clinical stakeholder meetings at the local and HHS level over the past week to refine and develop more comprehensive high-level guidance documents for PPE levels required in a wide range of different scenarios across the HHS. This has included review of available clinical evidence and best practice guides internationally, nationally and locally; as well as consultation with international, national and local experts. This work will culminate in a quick use

reference guide for selection of PPE across the broad range of clinical and clinical support tasks that are undertaken across Metro North, both in the dedicated COVID-19 clinical areas and all of our other clinical areas. I will share these documents widely early next week.

I am aware of wide reflection and personal consideration of the available clinical evidence and best practices guides. Your voice, concerns and ideas are important. Please join the consultation on our Metro North documents early next week to ensure your voice been put forward for consideration.

PPE procurement leads. Over recent weeks number of our staff have identified a wide range of ‘leads’ for PPE suppliers. Please continue to forward the details of these leads through to our EOC, so that we can work with our State procurement colleagues to validate the stock available against National Standards and action as appropriate. Please be assured that we are leaving no stone unturned.

PPE Innovation. There continues to be a wide range of work being done by Metro North and our government and non-government partners to explore all opportunities for innovation in PPE. This includes novel procurement & production, 3D printing, block-moulding and use of Powered air-purifying respirator (PAPR). We will share with you developments as they arise.

PPE training. It is important for you all to refresh yourself with the proper use of key PPE including gloves, surgical masks, N95/P2 masks, long sleeve gowns, aprons, goggles and/or face shields. Please visit our dedicated COVID-19 [website](#) to watch a video on the correct use of PPE, fit checking a P2/N95 mask and the range of ‘correct use’ guides. If you are still unsure of what to do, please discuss this with your supervisor who can arrange an additional session for you to refresh your skills and knowledge.

Vulnerable staff guidance

Our HR team have developed guidance for managers and staff to identify and manage staff in vulnerable groups. This document is now available through the “HR Information” tile on our COVID-19 [website](#). While you are there, please take the time to browse through the wide range of other HR information that has recently been uploaded.

I’m confident in Metro North’s ability to manage COVID-19, but like I always say, the call to action starts with you. Please continue to thoroughly and regularly wash your hands, use good cough hygiene and diligently practice social distancing – it really does make a difference.

Kind regards,
Dr Liz Rushbrook
 Metro North Health Incident Controller

Metro North HHS – Overview of Cases*

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases				Fever Clinics		
Virtual Ward	Inpatient Ward	Inpatient ICU	Recovered	Number of clinics	Presentations	
					Yesterday	Total
148	24	2	25	5	345	7007

*With effect 1000 28 March 2020

