



Update 20/04/2020

Dear Colleagues,

Today's a big day for many of you, with school resuming in a new way. Children are very adaptable, but I know it may be a stressful transition for your families. Remember that many people will be having similar experiences, so reach out to your colleagues and line manager, share your tips and be kind to each other. We're all in this together.

Here's the week in review:

Preparedness initiatives last week:

- PPE Clinical Advisory Group reviewed and updated [PPE guidelines](#).
- Refined our PPE forecasting tool
- Ongoing preparation for Virtual ED
- Continued staff training in virtual work environment, including virtual training and tools for occupational violence.
- Progressed response planning discussions with private hospital providers
- Established hotel accommodation for virtual ward patients who are unable to reside at usual residence.
- Directorates plan updated and prepared for publishing.

Our activity for the past week

- As at 10am today, we have had 325 confirmed people with COVID-19 in Metro North, of whom 272 have recovered.
- Expanded testing criteria continues to see fever clinic presentation. Assessment and testing through fever clinics bring the total to 11,912 presentations in the Metro North region.
- [Vidcasts](#) have been running for the last three weeks and continue to be a reliable source of information for staff. Last week, we had streamed an additional five vidcast sessions, covering the latest advice and updates on infection control, HR and staff wellbeing.
- Expanded resources for staff on the COVID-19 extranet, including professional information specific to [medical](#) officers and nursing and midwifery.

Looking after our people

Our new Chief Wellness Officer Bruce Sullivan participated in a vidcast with staff on Friday to talk about his approach and our priorities for taking care of our people. The main point Bruce raised is that kindness goes a long way. Even on a bad day, a kind gesture can make a huge difference to how people feel – not only patients but also with our colleagues. We will continue to implement the strategy for staff wellbeing during COVID-19.

Frontline staff flu vaccinations are continuing this week. Next week we will be offering vaccinations to other staff across the HHS. If you have already received your vaccine outside of work, please let your manager know so we can update your record.

Preparedness initiatives in the coming week

- Work with Healthcare Improvement Unit, State-wide ICU Clinical Network and Retrieval Services Queensland on establishing a Queensland Intensive Care support and telehealth program to assist with responding to COVID-19.
- Go live with Metro North Virtual ED
- Continue to refine specialty level plans across Metro North, eg paediatrics, mental health, subacute services, renal, cancer care, maternity.
- Review and synthesise Metro North and Directorate COVID-19 policies and procedures
- Review arrangements for outpatient services in Metro North to support access for Category 1 and 2 and long wait Category 3 patients.
- Continue to pursue staff accommodation options.
- Undertake a review of visitor restrictions in place in Metro North in line with Queensland Health policy.
- Continue to refine forecasting models for new cases and hospital bed requirements.

Maximising our resources

We have a working group currently focusing on maturing and refining all personal protective equipment (PPE) resources, education and training.

There is a wide range of resources and sessions (such as vidcasts and directorate and unit education sessions) available to help you refresh, re-train and answer your questions. We will have a vidcast tomorrow with some of our infection control nurses on PPE.

As a result of the low community infections in Queensland, planning to expand elective surgeries is underway with our increase expected as early as next week. It is also expected that we will start to see a return to some normal clinical activities. On this basis the working from home arrangement initiated as a result of COVID will cease from Friday, 1 May 2020. I appreciate that there may be some genuine need for these arrangements to continue and I would encourage you to speak with your line manager to consider these needs as part of the normal WFH arrangements policy and guidelines.

Regards,
Shaun