



## Update 27/04/2020

Dear Colleagues,

We are living through a historically significant event and I want to stress how important it is we take a step back and evaluate the importance of the work we are doing. Many of us are facing unprecedented working conditions and the challenges they bring. Our hard work is paying off and we have so far been successful in helping reduce the infection rate of COVID-19 in Queensland.

Your efforts to date have bought us valuable time and improved the capability of all our facilities to effectively treat those affected by the virus. No doubt there is still plenty of work ahead of us, but we are beginning to see the results of the hard work and planning that has been carried out across Metro North.

This week, as we resume some elective surgery, procedural work, outpatient appointments and routine breast screening, we will continue to take all precautions to ensure the health and wellbeing of our patients, colleagues and communities.

Here's the week in review:

### Preparedness initiatives last week:

- Ongoing 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.
- Metro North Virtual ED started receiving patients.
- Directorate COVID-19 Response Plans published.
- Reviewed and synthesised Metro North and Directorate COVID-19 policies and procedures.
- Planned for rebalancing the health system with recommencement of a range of elective procedures and services to be reactivated from Monday 27 April.
- Planned for recommencing routine breast screen services.
- Reviewed our visitor restrictions and expanded aged care visiting.

### Our activity for the past week

- As at 10am today, we have had 325 confirmed people with COVID-19 in Metro North, of whom 288 have recovered.
- Assessment and testing through fever clinics bring the total to 13,290 presentations in the Metro North region.
- 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 Peer Responder and RUOK? collegiate support network programs have been very popular with training for both programs filling up fast. If you would like to participate in one of these programs, please visit the [Staff Wellbeing portal](#) for details.

We are still recruiting psychologists for the #PPE4URMIND program which will provide tailored onsite support for staff directly working with COVID-19 patients. This program is planned to start during May.

The [Staff Wellbeing portal](#) also provides links to information about looking after your emotional, physical, social and financial wellbeing.

#### **Preparedness initiatives in the coming week**

- Enhance PPE stock level monitoring and continue to work with Health Support Queensland regarding supply issues.
- Recommence selected services and monitor progress.
- Plan for recommencement of oral health services from 5 May.
- Commence evaluation of pandemic response activities and identify strategies to embed new practices.
- Continue to review and refine pandemic response policies.
- New format weekly vidcast with CE and a member of the executive team on Mondays.

#### **Maximising our resources**

Personal protective equipment (PPE) supply and usage are being continually monitored. As shown in my Friday message, we have been designing on our own 3D printed mask to boost our stocks. We are fortunate to have the engineering and manufacturing expertise of the Herston Biofabrication Institute on hand.

#### **Executive appointment**

Dr Owen Ung has been appointed Director of the Metro North Comprehensive Breast Cancer Service. Thank you in anticipation for working with Owen to further improve the important care we provide for women and men in our community experiencing breast cancer.

Regards,  
Shaun