



Dear Colleagues,

A Message from the ED Operations – 08/04/2020

Another week has passed in our new COVID-19 environment and as always, we are continually innovating to meet the demands of our evolving response. I encourage you to look after yourselves and your family, check in on your colleagues and neighbours and remain vigilant in keeping a social distance and practicing effective hand hygiene.

Changes to Testing Criteria

This week has seen an expansion to our COVID-19 testing criteria. In Brisbane (including all of Metro North), Cairns and the Gold Coast testing will be made available to anyone who presents with acute respiratory symptoms where the cause for cough, sore throat, fever or pneumonia cannot be determined.

A person is eligible for testing if they have a fever (or history of fever) or acute respiratory symptoms, and, in the last 14 days:

- they were a close contact or a household contact of a confirmed case.
- they had been overseas, including on a cruise.

Testing is also possible for people who have a fever (or history of fever) or acute respiratory symptoms, AND:

- work in vulnerable settings such as healthcare, aged or residential care, military, correction facilities, detention centres and boarding schools.
- live in Brisbane, Gold Coast or Cairns (Brisbane includes the Metro North and Metro South Hospital and Health Services).
- live in an area where an outbreak has occurred.
- live in a First Nations community.

PPE guidelines

We have developed a [Metro North procedure on personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#) use for COVID-19. This includes guidelines on when to use standard infection control measures, when to use contact and droplet precautions, and when to use contact and airborne precautions.

This procedure has been developed in consultation with the Metro North PPE Clinical Advisory Group who will review it weekly and update as required. The procedure will be supported with additional PPE education materials to ensure all staff feel comfortable choosing the appropriate level of PPE and using it correctly.

Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) Fever Clinic

The Institute of Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) has opened a COVID-19 fever clinic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The IUIH Clinic is located at 3 James Street, Caboolture and is open from 8:30am – 4:30 am weekdays. Patients are being referred to the clinic from the Moreton ATSICHS clinics.

IUIH is also holding pop up flu vaccination clinics at their Margate and Morayfield clinics this week.

Vidcasts

Our Vidcasts have been extremely popular since their launch last week. I encourage you to continue tuning in or watching when you can [online](#) to keep informed on the latest up to date COVID-19 information. Please view the upcoming schedule on the [Metro North intranet](#).

Update on staff flu vaccinations

Free flu vaccinations are now available for frontline staff and will soon be available for all other staff. If you're unable to attend a staff flu vaccination clinic, you can receive a vaccination at a community pharmacy and present your receipt to your business manager (through your supervisor) for reimbursement. I'd also like to remind staff that unfortunately this year we are unable to provide flu vaccinations to contractors and students.

Assets and Infrastructure

This week I would like to shine a light on the Metro North Asset and Infrastructure team. Assets and Infrastructure includes a huge range of enabling services which are critical to our health service response to the pandemic.

Some of the team's work includes:

- Assisting with the establishment of our six fever clinics and assessment clinics,
- Coordinating the availability of oxygen and suction regulators at each facility,
- Installation of hand sanitising stations,
- Provision of separate shower facilities,
- Provision of additional storage for equipment and PPE,
- Separation of services within the Emergency Departments
- Supporting changes to inpatient wards with the installation of temporary walls,
- Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on existing hospital infrastructure projects, and
- Analysis of each facility's capacity for high volume oxygen flows.

On top of that, the team are managing business as usual and our Herston Quarter Redevelopment and Caboolture Hospital Redevelopment teams are continuing with our major infrastructure projects. Thank you all for your contribution.

Of the utmost importance now (and always) is being kind and respectful to our colleagues and consumers. Stress and anxieties are heightened due to the current climate. We need to remain aware that our colleagues and consumers are more than likely feeling this way too and remember our values. Always be kind and respectful towards each other, act with compassion and look after each other as one big Metro North team.

Also, an update on our new puppy Luna. She was delivered safely and is already a much loved member of the family.

As always, thank you for your tireless work and commitment to our COVID-19 response.

Regards,
Jackie