



29/04/2020

Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday the number of active COVID-19 cases in Queensland dropped below 100. This is great news and could not have been achieved without all of us playing our part, at work and at home. From this weekend some of the restrictions will ease around recreational activity. This doesn't mean social or physical distancing requirements have eased though. Keeping at least 1.5m away from people (when not directly delivering healthcare) is one of the best things we can do, along with hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, to protect ourselves and each other from coronavirus.

I am impressed to see so many staff have signed up already to support their colleagues through the Peer Responder and RUOKer training. There is no limit to the number of people who can do the training and participate in the support networks for your colleagues. You might have already seen some people wearing the bright yellow RUOK? shirts – by wearing the shirt these staff are letting you know they're available if you need support. We will also soon launch the COVID Staff Psychology Support program to offer tailored onsite support for staff directly working with COVID-19 patients.

Please take care of your loved ones, colleagues (Alana Geary has a wicked salted caramel fudge recipe) and self.

This week the Queensland government announced a new public health direction to protect healthcare workers and other essential workers responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the new direction, people can be fined up to \$1335 if they threaten to or intentionally cough, sneeze or spit on essential workers. They can also face criminal charges. This is in addition to our existing occupational violence management strategies.

We have recommenced booking some elective surgeries and procedures this week. While we settle into our 'new normal' we will continue booking a week in advance and monitor PPE and community COVID-19 activity. We've also started booking routine breast screens and from Tuesday some oral health services will restart. Our directorate emergency operations centres (EOCs) have been moving to 'lean forward' and will continue to monitor the situation and reactivate if needed. We must remain vigilant and agile as we adapt and respond to the needs of our community while taking every precaution against coronavirus.

Please note that the COVID SAFE App has been launched and Metro North is supportive of it as a mechanism to support Contact Tracing.

I'm off after this week for a few weeks of leave. Tami Photinos will be Acting ED Operations.

Be kind to each other and keep up your handwashing and distancing!

Regards,

Jackie