



Metro North Hospital and Health Service - Putting people first

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Message from the Executive Director
MEDICAL SERVICES
Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook

Dear colleagues,

Thank you to everyone whose incredible teamwork and efforts over the last few weeks has helped Metro North to become well-prepared and extremely organised. Our plans will continue to mature and develop as COVID-19 cases slowly grow in our community and I'd like to provide some updates on:

- PPE
- Visiting your GP
- Expanded testing criteria

PPE

There is substantial work being done within Queensland to create more transparency in relation to the COVID-19 supply chain system. This work will be rolled out as it becomes available and provide further assurance to our staff and the Community of our levels of preparedness. There is still a way to go, but we are working hard for you.

I would like to openly commit to the safety and protection of you, our greatest asset. Please be assured that we are committed to management within the guidelines – the *Interim infection prevention and control guidelines for the management of COVID-19 in healthcare settings*. Our recently established Metro North PPE Advisory Group will continue to ensure our guidelines are clear, reviewed regularly and supported by contemporary, accessible training, audit and assurance.

Visiting your GP

GPs are continuing to see patients and are increasingly using telehealth as their preferred consultation format to reduce the risk of community spread.

If you need to visit your GP, please call ahead to determine the best method for your consultation, for example regular repeat prescriptions may now be arranged over the phone and sent to pharmacies for collection. Your GP will advise if you require to visit in person.

I'd like to remind you also of GP respiratory clinics that are available to treat patients with respiratory illnesses. There are now three clinics open within Metro North with a fourth to open in the near future. These are in addition to our Metro North clinics. You can find the details on our [website](#) or on the Primary Health Network (phn) Brisbane North's webpage.

Expanded testing criteria

So far Queensland has 32 cases of COVID-19 unable to be linked with travel of contact with a confirmed case. These cases were spread evenly across Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Cairns.

The Chief Health Officer Dr Jeanette Young announced this morning that testing for

COVID-19 in these three centres will be expanded to help determine any levels of community transmission. Anyone presenting to a GP or fever clinic in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Cairns with respiratory symptoms indicative of COVID-19, can now be tested.

Our pathology testing guidance will be updated tomorrow to reflect these changes.

Thank you all for remaining agile and flexible – you are delivering amazing things no matter the challenges that COVID-19 brings – I am truly in awe that you are ready, willing and able to take it on.

Regards,
Dr Liz Rushbrook
Metro North Health Incident Controller

Metro North HHS – Overview of Cases*

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases			
Virtual Ward	Inpatient Ward	Inpatient ICU	Recovered
114	10	5	159

*With effect 1000 06 April 2020

**Metro North has two recorded deaths