



Dear Colleagues,

In sad news today we confirm a third person from the Metro North area has passed away from COVID-19. The 83-year-old man passed away in New South Wales after contracting the disease after recently returning to NSW from a cruise. We offer our sincere condolences to the family during this difficult time.

I also have two short updates for you today:

- Important update to National Guidance
- Keeping you and your loved ones safe.

Important update to National Guidance

Overnight there was an update to the [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) CDNA National Guidelines for Public Health Units](#). The update included a change to the infectious period which is now considered to extend to 48 hours prior to onset of symptoms (from 24 hours) and changes to the definition of 'close contact' with a confirmed or probable case.

These changes mean that it remains critically important that people comply with self-quarantine and/or self-isolation orders that are issued to them. Our role in health is to ensure that we reinforce the importance of these orders and encourage and enable compliance. In extreme circumstances, we will need to refer non-compliance to our Public Health Unit and/or the Queensland Police for investigation and action.

All facilities have received revised pathology and testing documentation that reflect these changes this afternoon to pass onto relevant areas. This documentation has also been uploaded on the [Metro North COVID-19 extranet](#).

Keeping you and your loved ones safe

I've had some of you ask me about ways to keep your family safe as you go between home and work during this time. As you know, the very best strategy is to follow impeccable hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette and social distancing. For frontline staff, the appropriate use of PPE consistent with our endorsed [Metro North procedure](#) is also essential.

We've also created a [one-page cheat sheet](#) with some simple strategies to help you keep your safety and the safety of your loved ones at the front of mind before, during and after your shift. Check it out, share with your colleagues or maybe even stick it on the fridge at home. You'll already know many of these strategies, but it can be helpful to have a visual reminder. Thank you to our skilled design team for putting this resource together!

Today and this weekend, please take care of your physical and mental health, switch off your social media and the news from time to time and of course:



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	Fever clinic presentations over 24 hours
54	6	4	265	268

*With effect 1000 18 April 2020

**Metro North has three recorded deaths (one person a return traveller into NSW, who passed away in NSW)

*** These numbers reflect the cases being managed by Metro North