



COVID-19 update 79 – 26/04/2020

Dear Colleagues

It's been a big week of COVID-19 preparation and response. We've seen changes to the [CDNA National Guidelines](#) (again!), launched a new Virtual ED Service, closed two fever clinics and have begun looking towards returning some of our health service activities back to usual levels.

As Shaun raised on Friday, this does not mean it will soon be business as usual, but rather, a gradual ramping up of our health services to slowly return to normal levels.

It's important we do this so that our patients, who have been patiently waiting for surgeries to recommence, can receive the treatment and care they need. We will of course continue to observe social distancing practices to ensure that we play our part in reducing the infection rate of COVID-19.

Today I want to highlight some important updates:

- Home restrictions to be eased this week
- Testing and Pathology form updates
- Health services recommencing this week
- Working from home and meeting directives

Home restrictions to be eased this week

Today the Premier announced that some restrictions will be eased this week, after relatively low numbers of new COVID-19 cases.

From 11.59PM Friday, May 1, people are allowed to.

- Go for a drive;
- Ride a motorbike, jetski or boat for pleasure;
- Have a picnic;
- Visit a national park; and
- Shop for non-essential items

There are three conditions that apply to the above:

- Social distancing and hygiene must be maintained
- You have to stay within 50km of home and
- Outings are limited to members of the same household or an individual and one friend

All other rules including gatherings and limits on visitors remain in place during this time. These restrictions will be reviewed in two weeks.

Testing and pathology updates

This week's changes to our testing criteria will help us better identify and respond if or when there is an increase in community transmissions. The new CDNA guidelines Liz spoke about yesterday have been incorporated into our Testing and Pathology documents, including:

- [Advice for all patients tested for COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Clinical Screening Checklist](#)
- [Pathology Testing for suspect cases](#)
- [Information for Patients and Visitors](#)

Health services recommencing this week

In case you missed it, the decision has been made to restart several health service activities this week, including

- Outpatient appointments
- Elective surgery and procedural work
- Routine breast screening

Working from home and meeting directives

The working from home directive is wrapping up this week on the 1 May. It is important you speak with your Line Manager before this date if you need to continue working from home due to your own personal circumstances.

From the 4 May, training & development, along with 'business as usual' meetings will be allowed to resume.

Thank you all for yet another productive week. I am so pleased to be part of a HHS that has responded with such a high degree of professionalism and commitment to address the challenges that this virus has posed. Your energy gives me energy. I am constantly buoyed when I hear wonderful things being said about us as a collective or about individual staff and it makes me realise that we are committed to the vision that Shaun has set for us, which is to be the biggest, the best and the nicest HHS. I am also looking forward to the commencement of planning as we navigate the best way forward to reintroduce services across Metro North.

On a lighter note, I recently joined a Facebook group called Driveway Dancing, Thanking Essential Workers. This was originally started by a Brisbane woman and was highlighted on the ABC news a couple of weeks ago. Those of you who watched the news that night would have seen a couple of MNHHS employees dancing in their driveway. This afternoon (Sunday) at 5pm Driveway Dancing will once again be happening. Elton John's "I'm Still Standing" is the song for the day and I will be dancing. I don't have an Elton John costume, but I will do my best!! I have tried to convince my family to join me but so far all they will do is stand behind the camera, my husband films, my family laughs at me and the neighbor's think I am crazy....but I am there all the same!!! If you feel so inclined, then join me!!

Until tomorrow!

Kindest regards,
Alanna Geary
Metro North Health Incident Controller

Metro North HHS – Overview of Cases*

HHS	Patients being managed by HHS					FEVER Clinics			
	Total In-patients		Virtual Ward / HITH / or similar	Deaths **	Total cases managed by HHS (including recovered) ***	# of clinics	Presentations		
	ICU-NOT Ventilated	ICU-Ventilated					Last 24 hrs	TOTAL ^	
MN TOTAL	6	0	3	327	3	318	3	132	13123

*With effect 1000 26 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