



## COVID-19 update 81 – 28/04/2020

As we continue to flatten the curve, I'd like to take the time to reflect on the journey we've been on over the past couple of months and sincerely thank everyone across the service for their commitment to Metro North's pandemic response. I'm sure I can speak on behalf of myself and Dr Liz Rushbrook when I say that, as a health service, Metro North is truly leading the way in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, we have seen another day with zero new confirmed cases, this is something we as Queenslanders and healthcare professionals can be immensely proud of.

Today's updates include:

- Metro North Activity
- Influenza Vaccinations
- Reduction in hours for TPCH Fever Clinic
- Ease of Restrictions
- Staff Wellbeing

### **Metro North's Activity**

We currently have the lowest numbers in our virtual ward since it's opening – just 26 people are under their care. Our inpatient wards are currently housing six COVID-19 positive patients. To date, Metro North have seen 288 positive cases of COVID-19 recover and three deaths. While three losses of life is a low number in comparison to the rest of the world, it does not make them any less tragic for the victims and their families and our thoughts go to those people who are grieving the loss of a loved one. To those staff who have cared for the patients we have lost, thank you.

I am sure you are grieving somewhat also, so please know your colleagues are thinking of you. While our numbers are low it is still an inordinately stressful time, so please take time to reflect on how you are feeling and if you need any assistance please do not hesitate to seek out the support you require. Talk to your line manager, a colleague or a friend and know that there are opportunities for support which can be accessed for you. [Benestar](#) is a free, 24 hour 7 day a week service available to our staff.

We are still seeing approximately 150 people presenting to our fever clinics daily but as you would realise the positive numbers are very low.

### **Influenza Vaccinations**

Influenza vaccinations are available to all staff (other than students and contractors). I encourage everyone to be vaccinated this year. I have always been a huge advocate of the flu vaccine, my previous life as an Infection Control nurse means that I will always espouse the virtues of vaccination, however this year more than ever before we need to reduce the burden of disease within our community. If all staff in MNHHS have the vaccination (ambitious as that is) it will assist in keeping our workforce healthy and on the frontline with our patients and best of all, you'll get a lollipop! I am also very aware that anyone wanting to visit a residential aged care facility will be required to have had their influenza vaccination. If you are wanting to visit an elderly loved one this is just another reason to be vaccinated!

For information on where to get your flu shot at your facility, check in with your line manager.

### **Reduction in TPCH Fever Clinic**

Our TPCCH fever clinic are reducing their hours as of Monday May 4, 2020. They will be open 7 days from 8am – 6pm for patients to be tested. Outside these hours, the closest fever clinic is located at the RBWH.

### **Ease of Restrictions**

I know I touched on this briefly yesterday but wanted to go into a bit more detail about what the latest lift on restrictions mean for us. With Queenslanders integrating back into the public for more than just essential shopping and exercise we could see a spike in community transmissions if social distancing and excellent hygiene measures are not upheld. It is paramount that we keep up the excellent work to ensure we can continue moving forward and not backwards in our COVID-19 response. From May 2, 2020 Queensland's restrictions will ease. This will allow some recreational activities to take place within 50km of a person's home, with members of the same household or an individual plus one friend. The social distancing requirements must be maintained, and it remains imperative that there is a continued vigilance around hygiene. ***So please remember little Xavier's message from yesterday...keep your distance and wash your hands.***

This little bit of freedom is dependent on Queensland's ability to continue flattening the curve so please do the right thing! Restrictions are to be reviewed in two weeks! I am so looking forward to the day when we can resume to some form of normality.



### **Staff Wellbeing**

We've been working through this COVID-19 environment for quite some time now and restricted from life as normal for over a month. As dedicated health service employees we've all been going above and beyond, working extra hours in conditions that are unprecedented in our lifetimes. Liz and I are very cognisant of the need for our staff to be well both physically and psychologically as we navigate our new and constantly changing world. Please take the time to go through the resources on our [Staff Wellbeing extranet](#) site – you may find something you didn't know you needed!

If you want to dig a little deeper, please look into our [RUOK: Collegiate Support Network](#) or our [Peer Responders: Psychological First Aid program](#). Both require staff volunteers willing to help support their colleagues. We'll all get through this as long as we support each other in true Metro North style!

Those of you who know me, know that I have grown children and a couple of “step-grandchildren” and although under normal circumstances they come in and out of our home, all but one don't live with us. For a few years now we have always had family dinner on a Wednesday night, occasionally we go out as in this photo, but under normal circumstances they come to our home. It seems like so long since I have seen them all and I miss them so very much. Despite the chaos that 10 people cause and the volume of food they consume, this current crisis has made me realise that it is the simple things that matter the most, for me that is my family.



Liz is back tomorrow in the Incident Controller role and I will return on Saturday. Please keep up the outstanding work, stay safe and most of all be happy!!

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 Pts		Last 24 hrs					TOTAL^	
	ICU-NOT Ventilated	ICU- Ventilated							
MN TOTAL	6	0	3	26	3	288	4	298	13,588

\*With effect 1000 27 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