



COVID-19 Update 91 – 08 May 2020

Dear colleagues,

It is great to be back in the Metro North EOC after a few days away and it is so very encouraging to share with you an update

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk has revealed Queensland will gradually re-open from next weekend, with dining out, small gatherings and beauty salons all set to return. The move into step one of re-opening will start on Saturday, 16 May, **not** this weekend. While this is exciting news for Queenslanders, now's not the time to drop the ball. Again, I remind you, if you are unwell please stay home and only leave the house for a COVID-19 test. The future depends on what we do over the next week.

I'd like to share two updates with you today:

- Re-establishing volunteers
- Check-in on yourself

Re-establishing volunteers

I'm aware of some recent discussions regarding the re-establishment of volunteers at our facilities. The health and safety of our volunteers is extremely important, and their return must be managed on a case-by-case basis. If you do choose to invite volunteers back to work, please consider the following:

- When contacting volunteers to invite them back, please ensure you provide them with a link to our COVID-19 extranet page so they're aware of resources and information available to them.
- It is highly recommended that volunteers receive this year's influenza vaccination. Those who are over 65 should receive the FluZone® (high dose) vaccine which has been shown to better reduce rates of flu infection in and above this age group compared to the standard vaccine, and it also seems to protect against pneumonia
- Introduce a sign on/sign off sheet for volunteers to clearly state that they have no respiratory symptoms at the start and end of **all** shifts.
- Please remind volunteers of the importance of social distancing. If available, please have clinical staff provide tips on how to properly wash hands.
- Consider a staggered approach to support arrangements of the above.

Please note that many of our volunteers are within the vulnerable category. They should not resume volunteering if it goes against the advice for vulnerable people. There should be consideration that they remain home. While these decisions will be left to each directorate's discretion, please make sure you are exercising caution, common sense and care.

Check-in on yourself

It's been more than three months since the Queensland Government declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a public health emergency. Since then, we have been doing everything we can as a health service and as individuals to flatten the curve. Our social lives, holiday plans and day-to-day routines have changed exponentially. As a health service, it goes without saying that COVID-19 has affected our working lives too.

It's important to really take a moment to slow down, reflect and assess your mental health and wellbeing. We spend a lot of time and energy caring for our patients and each other, so please make sure you're showing yourself some kindness and compassion too. Our [Staff Wellbeing page](#) has been accessed over 4,000 times since it went live. I'd like to see more of you making the most of all the emotional, physical, financial and social wellbeing resources available! If you'd like to reach out and speak to someone directly our employee assistance program is [Benestar](#). They are available for you and we are keen for you to use the service if you feel that they can be of assistance. You do not need your line manager to support the use of the service. It is free of charge and you can access the information via the above link.

Last week Liz mentioned that the Metro North EOC was slightly scaling back. I am pleased to say we will mostly be closed over the weekend and it is a well-deserved weekend for our hard-working EOC staff! I will provide you all with an update on Sunday afternoon to capture events over the weekend and of course if required please call the MNHHS Duty Executive on-call (which is me this weekend) for further assistance and advice.

Please note that directorate reports will still be required by 9am and the Room Manager and Intelligence Officer will be in the office to ensure that these are actioned accordingly.

For those of you who are mothers, are spending time with your mothers, mothers-in-law, grandmothers or great grandmothers have an amazing day and enjoy some of our new-found freedoms. Remember to follow the guidelines and have a wonderful day.

As I have mentioned previously, I have missed not having the company of my children and their partners and my beloved furr-grandbabies, so I am looking forward to spending time with them, albeit in staggered shifts. My own mother lives well past the 50km radius of travel, so I will not physically be with her on Mother's Day. However, I can report she has now completely mastered the art of FaceTime so I will call her and spend some virtual time with her. The flowers and the gift basket have been ordered for her, so I am hopeful she receives them on Sunday as promised.

Kind 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		ICU-NOT Ventilated					ICU-Ventilated	Last 24 hrs	TOTAL^
	ICU-NOT Ventilated	ICU-Ventilated								
MN TOTAL	5	2	2	7	3	310	4	254	16,295	

*With effect 1000 08 May 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