



## COVID-19 update 93 – 11/05/2020

Dear colleagues,

I'm glad to be starting off the week back in the Incident Commander chair – even if it is from the home office today. It seems that Mother's Day delivered me a tummy bug so as I say to you all almost every day, that's cause enough to stay home and keep my distance from others until I'm feeling better.

I was lucky though to enjoy Mother's Day yesterday at home. With teenage boys, gone are the days of cute hand drawn notes and pictures but I felt very lucky to manage a sleep in, pop in to see my own Mum and have some quality time with each of my boys 😊. I hope all our Metro North mums, step mums, grandmothers and guardians also felt the love yesterday.

We start the week again on a hopeful note with no new confirmed cases in QLD and 25 active cases. This is down from 55 active cases in the State at this time last week.

There's just a few updates and reminders from me today:

- Enhanced testing for COVID-19
- Returning to face-to-face work
- Key changes to CHO directions over the weekend

### Enhanced testing for COVID-19

Current National and State guidance allows for enhanced testing for COVID-19 in specific circumstances. Metro North is working to implement enhanced testing across all of our fever clinics where possible (in addition to enhanced testing that is already occurring within our emergency departments and inpatient services). I anticipate that our processes and screening tools will be released in the next few days.

### Returning to face-to-face work

It's been over a week since we made the decision to implement returning to face-to-face after seeing consistently low levels of community transmission.

For those of you that have transitioned back to face-to-face work, or making the transition this week, I want to reiterate the critical importance of implementing appropriate physical distancing measures at work and enhanced personal and physical workplace hygiene practices so far as practicable. As health care leaders, it's important we continue to lead by example and demonstrate social distancing wherever possible in our work areas, when breaking for lunch, waiting for our coffee and leaving for the day/night. Remember to wipe down your desk or workspaces and where you can, try not to share your possessions with others, like pens or other stationary. There's an excellent [cheat sheet](#) about looking after yourself and keeping safe for work on our extranet site. While it's particularly useful for clinical staff, it is a great resource regardless of your role.

There are still a number of staff working from home who are deemed vulnerable. We are fully supportive of these arrangements under our [Guidance for staff in vulnerable groups](#) and will continue to work closely with those staff to ensure we implement options for work that are safe and effective. As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your working arrangements, speak first to your Line Manager.

## Key changes to CHO directions over the weekend

As many of you are aware (perhaps some of you are even counting down), the Chief Health Officer announced a gradual easing of current restrictions on movement in Queensland commencing 11.59pm, Friday 15 May.

I just wanted to highlight a few of those key changes with you. The following will be permitted as of the weekend:

- Gatherings of a maximum of 10 people together in a public space
- Dining in at restaurants, pubs, clubs, RSLs and cafes for a maximum of 10 patrons at one time as part of a gradual re-opening (no bars or gaming)
- Recreational travel of a radius of up to 150km from your home for day trips
- Some beauty therapies and nail salons for up to 10 people at one time
- Re-opening of libraries, playground equipment, skate parks and outdoor gyms (a maximum of 10 at one time); and more.

For the full list, visit the [QLD Health COVID-19](#) website. Again, while this extra freedom is exciting for some, it is no time for us to relax on our commitment to consistent hand hygiene and social distancing. In fact, it should only encourage us to stay true to the cause of managing COVID-19. I am certain that we will need to remain vigilant and will have cause to 'dance' with small fluctuations in disease incidence for at least the remainder of this calendar year.

Kind regards,  
Dr Liz Rushbrook  
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	4	2	2	4	3	314	4	118	16,781

\*With effect 1000 11 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