



COVID-19 update 97 – 15/05/2020

Dear Colleagues,

There have been two additional cases recorded overnight in Queensland, with one of those cases originally diagnosed interstate. There were no new active cases recorded in the Metro North area, and I am pleased to report that two patients were discharged from our virtual ward overnight, bringing the total number of patients in our care to six.

As we head into the weekend, I cannot stress enough that if you have any symptoms, please be incredibly cautious and stay home, unless you leave home to get tested. Our success in the next few months really depends on all of us doing the right thing by each other.

My updates today include:

- Enhanced testing for COVID-19
- School returns for all grades – 25 May
- Domestic and family violence support and resources
- Our social workers and psychologists

Enhanced testing for COVID-19

As Liz mentioned earlier in the week, Metro North has been working to implement enhanced testing across fever clinics where it is possible. These guidelines are now ready to go and have been reflected in our testing and pathology documents, screening tools and patient information. They also incorporate this week's updates to the [CDNA National Guidelines](#) and will be sent onto our facility EOCs this evening for implementation next week.

School returns for all grades – 25 May

Today Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk announced that Queensland schools will reopen for all grades from Monday 25 May. It has been an incredible effort from our principals, teachers and school staff who have kept classrooms open for children of essential workers, like us, and others, all while navigating this new online environment for those learning from home. For those of you who have family, friends, partners or spouses who are teachers, please let them know we are so thankful for their support.

Domestic and family violence – support and resources

This month is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month and continuing to raise awareness is as important as ever. I was deeply upset to learn that domestic and family violence (DFV) is the single biggest call for service for our Queensland Police Service and research shows these calls are likely to increase during a pandemic situation.

Healthcare facilities are often a first point of contact for people who have experienced DFV. So, I encourage you to increase your knowledge about DFV and ways you can support. Information can be found [here](#) on our intranet. If you are not confident in

responding to DFV, please consult with an expert in your clinical area, such as a social worker or a specialist DFV service for advice.

If you are experiencing DFV, please know support is always available for Metro North staff and can be accessed via our [Metro North Domestic and Family Violence page](#). All people deserve to live free from fear and violence and times of hardship or stress are not an excuse for violence. Those perpetrating family violence are responsible for their own behaviour – the person or people on the receiving end of this behaviour are not.

Our social workers and psychologists

On that note, I would like to highlight the important work our social workers and psychologists do to advocate for and support the mental health and wellbeing of our patients, particularly over the past few months. Both disciplines are feeling the implications of COVID-19 and have been working tirelessly to get new systems in place, create new models of care, such as our new [COVID Staff Psychology Service](#), upskill the workforce on issues such as complex grief and bereavement, move their work into the virtual space and support loved ones to stay connected with each other through new platforms. The impacts of COVID-19 on our community are vast and complex and will have long term implications for many. We are so grateful to have our psychologists and social workers to help us navigate those challenges. Thank you for what you do!

To finish the week, I'd like to introduce you to Maggie (the Basset) and Norbit (the Great Dane). They are also part of my grand-furbaby family and as you can see, neither of them understand the requirements of physical distancing - Maggie is an absolute cuddler!



The biggest issue for her is that her legs are a little too short to get herself onto the lounge suite, so she often misses out to her much larger brother. I am still working on my husband to convince him we need our own puppy - watch this space!

Enjoy the slightly relaxed restrictions this weekend and unless there's anything significant to report over the weekend, you won't be hearing from us until Monday. The Metro North EOC will remain scaled back this weekend but of course, if any of our facilities require support, please contact the MNHHS Duty Executive on-call (which Liz and I will share this weekend).

Kind regards,
Adjunct Professor 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-Total					ICU-Ventilated	Last 24 hrs	TOTAL^
MN TOTAL	4	2	1	2	3	317	4	226	17,789	

*With effect 1000 15 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