



COVID-19 update 98 – 18/05/2020

Welcome back to another week – I hope you all had an enjoyable weekend with friends and family after restrictions changed on Friday night. Queensland recorded two more cases overnight bringing the state's total of active cases to 13 and we now only have one patient in ICU. Over the weekend, we deployed a team of nursing staff to Rockhampton to assist with their response to a recent case. They will be joined by some doctors later this week.

My updates today include:

- If you're sick, stay home!
- Fun facts about surgical masks
- Free roadside assistance and other offers

If you're sick, stay home!

If you are sick, mildly or otherwise, **please stay home**. I cannot stress this enough, regardless if your symptoms are COVID-19 related or not. It might feel silly to be over-cautious, but this enables you to recover from your illness, and protects those who work around you. If you're experiencing any of the following, please come forward to get tested for COVID-19 as quickly as possible:

- Fever (of 38 degrees or above) or history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills) OR
- Acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, sore throat)

Please also consider presenting for extended testing if you have sudden unexplained onset of any other reported symptoms of COVID-19 including fatigue, loss of smell, loss of taste, runny nose, muscle pain, joint pain, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting and loss of appetite.

Fun facts about surgical masks

In these COVID-19 times, we have all learnt that things are often more detailed than they first seem. This is the case for me for surgical masks.

Until recently, the only type of masks we have had available in our hospitals have been 'level 3' surgical masks. This is because the supply was unrestricted, and this enabled use across all of our departments, without risk of confusion.

With the current global pandemic, this is no longer possible, so 'level 1' flat surgical masks, and 'level 2' flat surgical and P2/N95 masks are now available for use within certain areas in our hospital. The characteristics of each level of surgical mask can be found in the [Queensland Health Interim infection prevention and control guidelines for the management of COVID-19 in healthcare settings](#). The key differences between the levels relate to the level of water permeability. A short guide:

Level 1 Surgical mask: Suitable for general purpose medical procedures where the wearer is not at risk of blood or body fluid splash, or to protect staff and/or the patient from droplet exposure to microorganisms.

Level 2 Surgical or P2/N95 mask: For use in emergency departments, dentistry, changing dressings on small wounds or healing wounds where minimal blood droplet exposure may possibly occur.

Level 3 Surgical or P2/N95 mask: For all surgical procedures, major trauma first aid or in any area where the healthcare workers is a risk of blood or body fluid splash.

Free roadside assistance and other offers

A number of companies are offering discounts for healthcare workers during the COVID-19 outbreak. AAMI has a great offer on at the moment granting [free roadside assist](#) for all doctors, nurses and hospital staff

Australia-wide until 31 December 2020. You don't even need to be an AAMI customer to receive this benefit but please make sure you read the [T&Cs](#).

Our [COVID-19 extranet page](#) houses a ton of great discounts and offers available to healthcare workers. If you haven't already, be sure to [have a look](#) and see if there's anything you like the look of.

Our workload in the Metro North EOC has been fairly stable over the last week or so and we have decided to scale back Incident Commander messaging to keep your inbox clear. As of this week, you will receive an update from either myself or Alanna on Mondays. If any information needs to be communicated to you outside of this schedule, we will provide an 'extraordinary' message.

So, enjoy your week, wash your hands and get tested if you're sick! I'll be in touch next week with updated numbers and more information for you.

Kind regards,
 Dr Liz Rusbrook
 Metro North Incident Commander

Metro North HHS – Overview of Cases*

HHS	Patients being managed by HHS						FEVER Clinics		
	Total In-patients		ICU Pts	Virtual Ward / HITH / or similar	Deaths **	Total cases managed by HHS (including recovered) ***	# of clinics	Presentations	
	ICU-Total	ICU-Ventilated						Last 24 hrs	TOTAL^
MN TOTAL	3	1	1	2	3	318	3	172	18,464

*With effect 1000 18 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