



## COVID-19 update 168 – 13/10/2020

Dear colleagues,

I'm very pleased to say it is another day of zero new cases of COVID-19 in Queensland! It is great to start the week knowing we continue to be diligent in our response to the pandemic and I hope you're feeling somewhat pleased that your hard work over the last several months has paid off. Metro North is currently caring for two COVID-10 positive patients. I know that these two patients will receive excellent care and hopefully will soon be on the road to recovery. Thank you to those who are overseeing and undertaking their care.

### Two days of pandemic leave

We continue to receive a handful of questions regarding the two days pandemic leave which was announced the other by the DG and Deputy Premier. Please note that:

- The two days leave will be available from 1 November 2020 and is granted to all Queensland Health staff except for Health Executive Staff (HES) and Ambulance Executive Staff (AES) level staff.
- It is to be granted to permanent and temporary (who have more than three months continuous service as at the eligibility date) full time and part time employees (pro-rated).
- It is to be taken at a mutually convenient time and wherever possible where backfill is not required, for example low demand periods.
- It will be paid at a flat rate with no leave loading.
- The special leave is subject to expirations after two years if not taken or upon separation from Queensland Health whichever is sooner and is not cashable.

Employees must be employed on the eligibility date of 10 September 2020 to be entitled to the two days additional leave.

### Changes to visitor restrictions

In the COVID-19 [vidcast](#) last week with Jackie Hanson and Michelle Stute there were some questions raised about the details of the [Hospital Visitors Direction \(No. 6\)](#) which is in place across Metro North. This direction means that:

- A maximum of two visitors may visit a patient at one time, at any time within a facility's visiting hours, for any length of time. There is no time limit to their visit however they must abide by the ward's standard visiting hours.
- For end of life visits, more than two visitors may visit a patient at one time. These permissions can be granted by the executive director of the facility at their discretion.

### Hotel Quarantine

Since the inception of the Hotel Quarantine requirements Metro North has managed many of the hotels where returning residents or visitors to Queensland are required to quarantine. EOC MN has worked with Public Health, Community & Oral Health and the facility EOC's to manage this cohort of individuals. There are numerous layers to the process of hotel quarantine, and we are now ascertaining the best possible way to sustain this now and into the future. Thank you to all who have been involved in the management of this arm of the COVID 19 responsibilities, you have done an outstanding job!! A big shout out to the MN Public Health Team who have worked so exceptionally hard in this space and continued to manage the other challenges of the role of Public Health in a pandemic situation. The next steps are to bring all the tentacles of this together under the auspices of Community and Oral Health (COH). This will occur over coming weeks, so watch this space.

### Staff swiping upon entry

Even though concierge desks are currently active at the discretion of each facility, Metro North EOC is still asking for staff to swipe in when entering their work areas. Please don't let someone else swipe and open the door for you, it's important to have each individual swipe on entry to help with contact tracing should the need arise. A swipe once a day is all that is required to record your presence in the organisation.

### **Recommencement of training and meetings**

Now that we are at a Tier 0 response, training and meetings are okay to recommence. Just be sure that as long as physical distancing is possible and adhered to. I understand there may be work areas where this is not possible so if not please think about using alternative modalities for meeting. Teams has worked well for many of the meetings that I have attended over the last few months. I have been surprised at how fluid and well the process works!!! I have been to meetings, forums, workshops and even award ceremonies and they have been different but just as much has been achieved and just as much fun has been had as would have been had if the event had been held in person. We still need to look after each other, so if you can't be physically distanced in a room then Teams it!!!

### **Before and after!**

People have been asking how our new puppy is. He now weighs a whopping 20kgs. He came to us (12 weeks ago) weighing 8kgs so clearly, he is well fed and growing fast. The vet informs us he should stop around the 35kg mark!!!! Our lovely Dave was lucky enough to receive a bit of a pamper session last week! He was cleaned, groomed and cut into a handsome, tidy boy. I think he looks very dapper!!!

It's Mental Health Week this week and I know we talk about wellbeing a lot, but that's because it's important! It's also important to know that it's okay to be feeling a little tired, a bit run down and a bit anxious as we enter what would normally be a few months of socialising, activities and catching up for the silly season. So, if you've got an hour this week to yourself, try a bit of pampering like Dave and take some time to truly switch off.



Remember you need to look after Number 1...and that is YOU. So, while it is important to look after each other, take some time for yourself. Some time out to do something special that makes you feel good. Be like Dave.

Remember we are still all in this together. Metro North is a great place to work and we are a team. Remember one of our 5 values is teamwork so with that in mind I found a great quote from a fellow by the name of Larry Bird (apparently a Pro-Basketballer from the US).

*"Don't let winning make you soft. Don't let losing make you quit. Don't let your teammates down in any situation".*

Have a great week!!!

Kind regards,

Alanna Geary  
 Metro North Incident Controller

Current MN Response Tier Activated – **Tier 0**

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 24hrs	TOTAL ^	
	ICU-NOT Ventilated	ICU-Ventilated							
MN TOTAL	2	1	0	1	3	346	5	149	96,570