

MESSAGE FROM THE COVID-19 HEALTH INCIDENT CONTROLLER

Metro North Hospital and Health Service

Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook



14 April 2021

Dear colleagues,

This morning, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk announced that the current COVID-19 restrictions will ease at **6 am tomorrow, Thursday 15 April**.

This means that it will no longer be necessary to wear a mask, but I encourage you to always carry one with you in case you're unable to physically distance from others in crowded spaces. Visitor restrictions on hospitals, aged care centres, prisons and disability accommodation will also be lifted. For more information on restrictions in Queensland please see the [Queensland COVID-19 roadmap for easing restrictions](#).

Given the easing of restrictions, Metro North will move to Tier 0 of our COVID-19 response plan from 6 am Thursday and the Chief Health Officer has determined our healthcare facilities can move from 'Moderate' to 'Low' risk for PPE usage.

Thank you to everyone for once again adjusting and complying with the restrictions over the past few weeks. This latest outbreak placed a lot of additional pressure on our health service. I am proud of how we responded to keep our community safe in line with our Metro North values of respect, integrity, high performance and teamwork.

Vaccinations for adult household members of COVID-19 health workers

The Chief Health Officer recently announced that adult household members of health workers dealing directly with COVID-19 are eligible for COVID-19 vaccination as part of phase 1b.

We are now encouraging all adult family members living with Metro North staff who are working in COVID wards to be vaccinated. This includes all relevant health workers, including those who work directly in the COVID-19 ward or treatment areas managing COVID-19 positive cases. This also includes staff who provide support services to these areas.

Household members can register for the vaccine by completing the [pre-registration questionnaire](#). Household members should call 134 COVID (13 42 68) if they experience any issues. At this stage we have AstraZeneca vaccine available to all household members who wish to be vaccinated at all of our clinics.

There is limited availability for our Pfizer vaccine at this stage. Accessibility will change as supply becomes available in coming weeks/months.

Vaccinations for 1b cohort patients

Next week we will also commence vaccinating all outpatients and inpatients who are eligible and willing to be vaccinated by AstraZeneca. Outpatients will soon receive an invitation to register to register for the AstraZeneca vaccine and come in for a vaccination appointment should they wish to receive it.

Aged Care Direction – mandatory flu vaccinations

While the visitor restrictions to aged care facilities will ease from tomorrow, 15 April, the Chief Health Officer has issued a new Direction to protect those living in residential aged care facilities.

From 3 May 2021, you must have had the 2021 flu vaccine, if it is available to you, to enter an aged care facility. For more information on this Directive please visit the [website](#).

Our 2021 flu campaigns will soon be rolled out across our facilities, so keep an eye on your local facility bulletins for more information. Please remember that you must keep a two-week window between any vaccinations. This means if you have just received your COVID-19 vaccination, you must wait two weeks until you receive your flu vaccination and vice versa.

Regards,

Dr Liz Rushbrook
Metro North Incident Controller

Metro North Health – 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 24 hrs					TOTAL^	
	ICU-NOT Ventilated	ICU-Ventilated							
MN TOTAL	22	0	0	0	4	537	4	328	167708

*As at 14 April 2021, 1000

**Metro North Health has four recorded deaths (one person a return traveller into NSW, who passed away in NSW)

*** These numbers reflect the cases being managed by Metro North Health.