



**23 April 2021**

Dear colleagues,

### **Changes to the vaccine program**

Yesterday afternoon the Prime Minister announced that National Cabinet had agreed to bring forward vaccinations to phase 2a for people aged 50 and over to receive the AstraZeneca vaccine. State-run clinics, such as ours, will be able to offer this to over 50s from 3 May, and GP clinics will be able to offer this from 17 May. We will begin offering this to those over 50s that are within our area of responsibility as soon as possible.

Pfizer remains the preferred vaccine for people under 50, due to the small but serious risk of complications with the AstraZeneca vaccine. Pfizer will also continue to be made available to aged and disability care workers, frontline and quarantine workers in the 1a and 1b cohorts.

### **PPE fit testing**

We continue to fast-track fit testing program focusing initially on staff in (and directly supporting) COVID wards, Hotel Quarantine, Fever Clinics and ICU. By close of business today there will be just over 500 people tested. Testing will continue over the weekend to RBWH and TPCH staff working in COVID positive wards and hotel quarantine. Our wider program to broader priority staff will continue on Tuesday. Our aim is to have over 3500 people fit tested by early May.

Please be patient whilst we roll out this fit testing program to you all.

Today we completed 'train the tester' training to key CSDS personnel. This small but excellent team is now trained to be able to do testing right across our health service. Once we get to the end of our initial priority testing program we will be doing further train the tester training, so that we can have sustainable fit testing within all of our high risk areas.

If this program is unable to find an appropriately fitting P2/N95 mask for you, please notify your supervisor/line manager and we will work with you to find an appropriate solution tailored to your situation.

For more information, see our [FAQs](#) and broader [PPE resources](#).

### **International arrivals**

National Cabinet has agreed to extend the 50 per cent reduction of international passengers into Brisbane until 11.59 pm on Tuesday 27 April 2021. This will then revert to

1300 passengers per week as of midnight, Wednesday 28 April. Passenger numbers into Brisbane from Papua New Guinea will remain at a 25 per cent reduction, however we are currently awaiting advice in relation to the recommencement of FIFO workers.

In the last 24 hours, India has recorded the highest global daily increase of new COVID-19 cases. Because of this, the Prime Minister has also announced a temporary reduction in the number of flights from India by 30 per cent

### Changes to quarantine arrangements

As of 9 am today, 23 April 2021, important changes have been made to the [Quarantine for International Arrivals Direction \(No. 8\)](#).

- People are required to wear masks on balconies at quarantine hotels and cannot physically interact with other guests on balconies.
- People in home quarantine may only allow another person to enter the premises if they also live there, are there for the purposes of performing a COVID-19 test or in an emergency situation.
- A person who is not tested when requested to do so by an emergency officer will be required to quarantine for an additional 14 days. At this time, testing is requested both early and late in the initial quarantine period.

From 9 am on 7 May 2021, any travel to or from quarantine must be in an ambulance or by a transport provider endorsed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads with a transport plan.

### Flu vaccinations

Our flu vaccines have begun arriving at our facilities across Metro North. Please remember to bring your Medicare card and COVID vaccination card to your appointment and ensure you leave a two-week window between receiving your COVID-19 vaccine and your flu vaccine.

Facility	Location	Commencing	Time	Booking
STARS	6C inpatients (6A end) Level 6, STARS	Thursday 22 April 2021	See clinic door for details as times vary.	Not required
TPCH	Vaccination Clinic TPCH Education Centre	Tuesday 27 April 2021	7.30am – 4pm	Not required
Redcliffe	MBICC ground floor	Wednesday 28 April 2021	6am – 9.30am	Book online <a href="#">here</a>
RBWH	Level 2 Dr. James Mayne Building (walkway above escalators)	Tuesday 4 May 2021	8am – 4pm	Not required
COH	Brighton Auditorium	Tuesday 4 May	8.15am – 3.30pm	Not required

We will keep you updated with more information as other facilities commence their staff vaccination programs. Next week we will also launch the 2021 flu vaccine landing page where you will be able to find more information about the rollout.

The [Aged Care Direction](#) regarding the flu vaccine has also been updated so that **from 30 May 2021** (originally 3 May 2021), you must have had the 2021 flu vaccine to enter an aged care facility. This includes children over six months of age.

Finally, I would like to take a small part of your time to quietly and solemnly acknowledge ANZAC Day this Sunday. Many of you would be aware that I serve in the Royal Australian Navy, full time for some 25 years and more recently, since 2016, part time (very part time).

ANZAC time for me is a time to acknowledge and commemorate our Australian (and New Zealand) military past and present, and those individuals and their families that are part. I would like to acknowledge those who have served or are continuing to serve, and, in particular, those that have either lost their lives or been injured, including unseen injuries.

Lest we forget.

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		ICU-VENTILATED					Last 24 hrs	TOTAL^
	ICU-NOT VENTILATED	ICU-VENTILATED							
MN TOTAL	11	0	0	0	4	546	4	184	169723

\*As at 23/4/2021 0900

\*\*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.