

## MESSAGE FROM THE COVID-19 HEALTH INCIDENT CONTROLLER

Metro North Hospital and Health Service

Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook



### COVID-19 update 231 – 29/06/2020

Dear colleagues,

Following this morning's announcement about the COVID-19 positive staff member at TPCH, the Premier has announced a lockdown for South East Queensland, Townsville, Magnetic Island and Palm Island commencing at **6pm tonight, Tuesday 29 June 2021** until 6pm Friday 2 July 2021.

If you live in these areas you will only be able to leave your residence for limited permitted purposes such as:

- obtaining essential goods or services, including healthcare (including vaccinations)
- exercise
- attending essential work or childcare
- assisting vulnerable persons.

Masks must continue to be worn whenever you leave the house. A full list of restrictions is available on the [Queensland Health website](#).

Please continue to check the [contact tracing exposure sites](#) twice a day – before and after your shift – as the list of venues will continue to grow. If you have been to an exposure site, please follow the instructions on the website.

And please ensure you are signing in to work each day with the Qld Check-In app!

### Australian Hotspots

There have been more Australian Local Government Areas that will be declared as hotspots from 0100 tomorrow – Perth and Peel in Western Australia; and Darwin, Leitchfield and Palmerston in Northern Territory. The Declared Hotspots Direction will be updated overnight.

A reminder that there are a large number of hotspots in New South Wales, with the identified start date being 21 June 2021.

### Staff member case update

Our thoughts are with our staff member of TPCH who tested positive to COVID-19 today and is now admitted to hospital for care.

I know that this matter may be cause for concern for some of our team. I would like to reassure you that our hospital response team has been working hard today, with the support of public health to identify close contacts, to manage the risk to staff and patients as well as ensure we can safely operate our hospital.

We have identified that, at this time, the exposure sites within the hospital are limited to areas around our designated COVID ward that is separate to the main hospital building. We have identified a number of staff that require to be tested and isolated until 14 days after their last exposure. This will disrupt some of our services and the team is working to minimise the impact of our services.

It remains safe for all other staff to come to work, and for us to continue to provide care to patients in all settings.

If you have any concerns, please speak with your line manager in the first instance. Line managers can escalate any concerns, where appropriate, to local EOCs.

### **What to do if you share a house with a person that is identified as a close contact?**

With so many exposure venues, many of our staff are finding that some of their households have been identified as close contacts. If you find yourself in this situation, you must ensure that close contact isolates themselves and attends to a COVID-19 test as soon as possible. You, as a health staff member must also isolate (separate to them) until their test result is returned as negative. Once your close contact is isolated and has a negative result, you are free to return to work.

### **Working from home**

As a hospital and health service, **we are essential services and we are required to keep working.**

With that being said, we are supporting staff to work from home for the duration of the lockdown where appropriate. However, there are caveats to this. **All work from home requests must be approved by your Executive Director**, as at this time, we require staff to be diverted to operational priority work including clinical, clerical, cleaning and concierge work in other areas.

This means you may be required to support the operation of our fever clinics, concierge services and vaccination clinics. Corporate staff may be redeployed to provide administrative support to these areas to ensure clinical operations can continue to run safely and efficiently during this increase in activity.

Your local EOCs are currently working to provide a list to Executive Directors of areas that need additional support during this time. If you are not needed to support this work, you may then be granted permission by your Executive Director to work from home.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers can continue to work in our hospitals during this, but under certain additional conditions:

- The volunteer must have had at least one vaccination, preferably at least 10 days ago;
- The volunteer must not be a vulnerable person;
- The volunteer must be happy to continue to work;
- The volunteer must work in a non-high-risk area.

It has been a long day for some, and I would like to provide a big shout out to all that have put in extraordinary effort today. Particularly the public health team, the vaccinators, the fever clinic testers and those that have put on their welcoming smiles at our concierge stations.

Rest well tonight.

Kind 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						Yesterday	TOTAL ^
		ICU-NOT Ventilated	ICU-Ventilated						
MN TOTAL	27	0	0	0	4	606	5	1354	193074
<b>Vaccinations delivered by Metro North Health</b>									
28/6/21	3842			Total delivered		129,424			

\*As at 29/06/2021 at 1500

\*\*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.