

UPDATE FROM THE COVID-19 HEALTH INCIDENT CONTROLLER

Metro North Health

31 July 2021

Dear colleagues,

This morning, the Deputy Premier announced a three-day lockdown for the 11 Local Government Areas (LGAs) across South East Queensland commencing at **4pm today, Saturday 31 July 2021** until 4pm Tuesday 3 August 2021. This is the result of six new cases being identified following a student of Indooroopilly High School testing positive to the virus this week.

As you may be aware from media reporting, a visitor to RBWH coronary care unit (CCU) on Sunday 25 July has subsequently tested positive for COVID-19. Detailed contact tracing and testing of potentially exposed staff and patients is well underway in alignment with the RBWH Outbreak Management Plan and the RBWH CCU is temporarily closed to any admissions from other facilities. In addition, all patient hospital transfers out of RBWH to regional areas are suspended.

All staff should 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.

If you live in one of the LGAs, you will only be able to leave your residence for limited permitted purposes such as:

- obtaining essential goods or services, including healthcare (including vaccinations and testing) within 10 kilometres of home
- exercise with 1 person not in your household within 10 kilometres of home
- attending essential work or childcare
- assisting vulnerable persons.

A full list of restrictions is available on the [Queensland Health website](#).

Metro North will continue to be in moderate risk PPE for the duration of the lockdown and will remain at [Tier 1](#) in our COVID-19 response plan.

We are expecting an increase of activity through our Fever and Vaccination clinics, and staff across our facilities are making the necessary preparations to be able to support this.

Masks

Masks must continue to be worn whenever you leave the house. Staff are required to wear a flat surgical mask when at work. I encourage everyone to review the [correct procedure for wearing and changing surgical masks](#).

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.

Visitor restrictions

Visitor restrictions apply across all Metro North facilities.

Students are not permitted to attend any Metro North facility to undertake their clinical placement during the next 7 days, even if they are a fully vaccinated.

To support compliance with these restrictions, concierge services will operate across all Metro North facilities and I thank everyone for their efforts in mobilising the necessary arrangements so quickly.

Registrar rotation change

Metro North's registrar rotation change which was scheduled for Monday 2 August has been delayed for one week due to the restrictions across South East Queensland. Metro North's Chief Medical Officer, Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook is working with Directors of Medical Services on the implications of this and will provide further communication as it becomes available.

I appreciate these constant changes are challenging for our health service and I would like to thank everyone for their efforts in being so adaptable and responsive in implementing the necessary requirements to ensure we can keep everyone safe.

If staff have any queries or concerns, please contact your local facility EOC or speak to your line manager.

Please stay safe.

Kind regards,

Colleen Jen

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	14	0	1	0	4	654	5	530	215,455

*As at 31/07/2021 at 1300

**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.