



**Message from the Metro North Health Incident Controller | COVID-19 update 301 - Fri 24/12/2021 5:38 PM**

Dear colleagues,

**New QId cases recorded today: 589**

It's Christmas Eve! Thank you to all our staff working today and tomorrow, your outstanding efforts in running the state's biggest health service do not go unnoticed. Some important updates today, please read through carefully.

**Move to high-risk PPE status**

We are moving to **High Risk PPE** effective immediately. The key requirements of high-risk PPE are:

- A P2/N95 mask and protective eyewear is to be worn by all staff in all areas where direct patient care is being provided
- A flat surgical mask is reasonable for staff in non-clinical areas when attending to administrative duties
- A flat surgical mask should be worn by all patients where reasonably tolerated except when in their own bed without visitors or clinician contact
- A flat surgical mask is required for all visitors (except those with an exemption)

Some important clarifications:

- Staff should have a flat surgical mask on arrival to the hospital and progress to their work area and apply an P2/N95 mask before commencing their direct patient care.
- Staff can only remove their mask when sitting alone in their own closed office space or while sitting, socially distanced and having a meal. Please note that the greatest risk for staff transmission of COVID is in tea rooms during a meal break.
- For staff not yet fit tested it is appropriate and reasonable to do a fit check at the time of applying a P2/N95 mask.
- For males a P2/N95 mask requires a clean-shaven face along the mask contact points.

**Staff only COVID swab collection service**

A staff only COVID swab collection service has opened at RBWH Education Centre. The COVID swab collection service has been activated so that staff can rapidly access testing. Please ensure you bring along your staff ID card to assist with registration.

- Location: RBWH Education Centre, Central Drive
- Open: 0900 – 1630, Monday to Friday
- Bring: Your staff ID and Medicare card

**Vaccine clinics: Christmas and New Year period**

You will be able to access the COVID-19 vaccine over the Christmas and New Year period. Some clinics will have changed operating hours over the holidays, so please [check online](#) to find out what clinics are open near you to plan your trip.

**COVID procedures and guidelines per facility**

The extranet now includes a [page dedicated to COVID-19 procedures and guidelines](#) for each facility. Please familiarise yourself with content on this page.

### Point of care rapid antigen tests

A new direction was released last night which is now published online. It describes the guidelines for '[Point of Care Rapid Antigen Tests for COVID-19 for Queensland Public Hospitals Direction](#).' The main takeaways from this direction include:

- Rapid antigen tests are an important tool to enable Queensland Public Hospitals to manage the COVID-19 response.
- RT-PCR remains the preferred test for COVID-19 diagnosis but need not be used in the first instance where rapid antigen tests can be used by an authorised tester for screening purposes.

The full direction is online – please have a read to get a better understanding of these testing types.

### IC messages and COVID-19 updates

Over the break there won't necessarily be an incident controller message every day. Should staff need to be updated and/ or alerted to anything, the acting incident controller, whether that be myself or someone else, will provide the necessary details.

Thank you to all Metro North Health staff who have been part of the COVID response this year. Have a lovely day tomorrow with family and friends.

Regards,

**Louise O'Riordan**  
**Metro North Health Incident Controller**

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#### Helpful links

- [Upload evidence of your vaccine](#)
- [Qld Health contact tracing list](#)
- [Register for your vaccine](#)
- [Qld Health general COVID-19 page](#)
- [Metro North COVID-19 extranet](#)
- [COVID vidcast recordings on QHEPS](#)

#### Metro North Health – overview of cases\*

HHS	Patients managed by HHS					Fever clinics		
	Total in-patients		Virtual ward/ HITH/ similar	Deaths**	Total cases (inc. recovered) ***	No. of clinics	Presentations	
	135	ICU patients					Yesterday	Total^
MN total		ICU not ventilated	ICU ventilated					
	0	0	98	4	997	4	1251	269241

\*As at 24/12/21

\*\*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.