

## UPDATE FROM THE COVID-19 HEALTH INCIDENT CONTROLLER

Metro North Health

Louise O'Riordan



**24 February 2022**

Dear colleagues,

- Mask wearing and PPE
- Elective surgery
- Wellbeing resources
- Returning to work after international travel

Today there were 6301 reported new COVID cases in Queensland.

Metro North remains on [Tier 3 of our COVID response plan](#) and the high risk category of the PPE matrix. We are anticipating to shifting tiers early next week and will provide an update on Friday on what that will mean.

### **Mask wearing and PPE**

The Premier has announced today that at 6pm on Friday 4 March some COVID restrictions will lift.

Masks will no longer be mandatory in most places, such as cafes and shops, but will still be required in hospitals and aged care facilities, public transport and airports. Density limits will also be lifted for venues.

Despite mask rules changing in the community, we are still following our PPE matrix and remain on high risk. This will stay in place for the time being.

### **Elective surgery**

Elective surgery will resume in public hospitals across Queensland next week. While there have been some elective surgeries going ahead in a few Queensland hospitals, next week will mean that all Qld Health services will be performing elective surgeries.

### **Wellbeing resources**

Wellbeing resources are available to staff on the [extranet](#) site where you will find resources and support.

Staff psychologist open door sessions continue to run virtually. I encourage you to join a session for a supportive chat.

Session	Date/Times	Teams Link
COH	Thursday 2:30 – 3:15pm	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>
TPCH	Thursday 2:30 – 3:15pm	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>
PUBLIC HEALTH	Friday 2:30 – 3:15pm	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>
METRO NORTH	Friday 2:30 – 3:15pm	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>
RBWH	Thursday 12:30 – 1:15pm	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>

The Culture and Wellbeing team also have some upcoming Maintaining Morale sessions:

<b>Expressing gratitude</b>	Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb 10:00 – 10:20am and 12:00 – 12:20pm	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>
<b>Positivity and Joy</b>	Monday 7th March 10:00 – 10:20am and 12:00 – 12:20pm	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>

### Returning to work after international travel

A reminder that under [Hospital Entry Direction \(No.11\)](#) people returning from overseas cannot enter a hospital or healthcare facility in the first 14 days unless they have an exemption. This includes healthcare staff.

To apply for an exemption, please follow these steps:

1. Submit your exemption request via the [Queensland Government exemptions](#) portal.
2. Choose the ‘**General exemption from a health direction**’ option (do not choose ‘specialist/essential worker’)
3. Email the details of your request and your application reference number (RITM) to your directorate EOC, including your proposed return to work date. This will be provided to Metro North EOC.
4. Metro North EOC will liaise with Health Directions and communicate the application outcome as soon as it is known.

Information about [fit testing](#) and [staff testing locations](#) is available on the COVID extranet. The locations of [vaccination](#) clinics and pop up sites is available online.

Regards,

Louise O’Riordan  
Metro North Health Incident Controller

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**Current Metro North Health tier activated – [Tier 3](#)**

#### Helpful links

- [Register your positive RAT result](#)
- [Upload evidence of your vaccine or booster](#)
- [Qld Health contact tracing list](#)
- [Vaccination locations](#)
- [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**	No. of clinics	Presentations
	48	ICU patients					Yesterday
ICU not ventilated		ICU ventilated					
MN total	6	1	269	40	4	290	
Norfolk Island total ****	Total in-patients		HITH /Home monitored	Total cases including recovered	Deaths	Close Contacts in quarantine	
	ICU Not ventilated	ICU ventilated					
	0	0	0	9	109	0	1

Data as at 23/02/2022

\*\*Metro North Health has 37 recorded deaths (one person a return traveller into NSW, who passed away in NSW)

\*\*\* As part of an Intergovernmental Agreement, from 1 January 2022 Metro North Health is providing a number of health support services to Norfolk Island. This includes advice and support to staff on island in terms of managing COVID patients. The numbers in this section of the table refer to COVID patients who remain on Norfolk Island and are receiving direct care by staff on Norfolk Island.