



28 March 2022

Dear colleagues,

- Current situation
- Changes for close contacts
- COVID HR resources

Today there are 7816 new reported cases of COVID-19 in Queensland.

Current situation

We currently have 954 staff away from the workplace who are COVID positive or close contacts. We are also monitoring the weather as we know this may impact our staffing numbers as well.

Metro North is currently on [Tier 3](#) of our COVID response plan.

Metro North is caring for 827 people in the Virtual Ward. We have a throughput of between 130 and 200 people per day in the Virtual Ward, so there are a lot of people coming into and out of our care daily.

We are also managing COVID positive patients in some of our wards, with appropriate strategies in place to minimise further transmission.

Please remember to stay home if you are sick, get tested if you have symptoms, and wear your mask at work and whenever you can't socially distance out in the community.

Changes for close contacts

Changes to the [*Isolation of Diagnosed Case and Management of Close Contacts Direction \(No. 6\)*](#) came into effect today.

The changes include:

- exceptions for the post isolation and post quarantine face mask requirements, for children under 12 years of age, for medical reasons, in emergency situations or where otherwise required by law;
- exception to the post-isolation restrictions on entry to a vulnerable and high risk setting if the person is entering the setting in the performance of an official duty as

an emergency services responder, and complies with face mask and other PPE requirements of the setting;

- increasing the period of 4 weeks to 12 weeks for a person to be a cleared case, after their isolation period as a diagnosed person ends;
- aligning terminology for vaccination requirements for critically essential workers with the current ATAGI terminology, requiring them to have received a primary dose (no policy change).

Changes also came into effect today for the [Requirements for Workers at Government Nominated Accommodation Direction](#) which include:

- Removing surveillance testing and related record keeping/reporting requirements, requiring testing only where a facility worker has symptoms consistent with COVID-19;
- Clarifying that the direction applies to government nominated accommodation that may be used for either quarantine or isolation purposes;
- Clarifying that a vehicle used to transport an isolating or quarantining person is a designated zone, while it is being used for transport purpose and until it has been cleaned, and clarifying where transport operators now have the same obligations as facility operators, including to ensure fit testing for employees who enter a designated zone;
- Aligning terminology for vaccination requirements for critically essential workers with the current ATAGI terminology, requiring them to have received a primary dose (no policy change).

COVID HR resources

Information for staff who test positive or who are close contacts is available on the extranet:

- [Staff with COVID](#)
- [Staff who are close contacts](#)

The [Critically Essential Worker requirements](#) are still in effect.

Please speak to your line manager if you have any questions regarding return to work.

Regards,

Louise O’Riordan
Metro North Health Incident Controller

Current Metro North Health tier activated – Tier 3

Helpful links

- [Register your positive RAT result](#)
- [Upload evidence of your vaccine or booster](#)
- [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
	64	ICU patients					Yesterday
MN total		ICU not ventilated	ICU ventilated	827	52	3	246
	4	0					
Norfolk Island total ****	Total in-patients		HITH /Home monitored	Total cases including recovered	Deaths	Close Contacts in quarantine	
	0	ICU Not ventilated					ICU ventilated
		0	0	5	132	0	4

Data as at 28/3/2022

**Metro North Health has 52 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.