



29 March 2022

Dear colleagues,

- **Current situation**
- **Fit testing**
- **Changes for close contacts**
- **COVID HR resources**

Today there are 10,326 new reported cases of COVID-19 in Queensland.

Current situation

We currently have 978 staff away from the workplace who are COVID positive or close contacts.

Metro North is on [Tier 3](#) of our COVID response plan. We are caring for 829 people in the Virtual Ward.

We are watching the current situation carefully as we head towards another COVID peak.

At the same time we are also undertaking our debrief and recovery process. I will include a link to our debrief survey in my message this week for those who wish to provide feedback on our pandemic response to date.

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.

Fit testing

Staff in patient facing roles must be fit tested every 12 months or if there are any changes to your facial features (eg if you lose or gain weight).

Fit testing is available across facilities. To book a fit test, visit the [COVID extranet fit testing page](#).

Be sure to check your fit at the start of every shift.

PPE requirements

Metro North is still in the high risk category for PPE requirements.

At a minimum, this is a surgical mask in non-clinical areas on all of our facilities. For clinical care this is a minimum P2/N95 mask and protective eyewear, although there may be additional requirements as well. Please check the [PPE guideline](#) for the requirements for your type of work.

Changes for close contacts

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

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).

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. Staff who can return to work under the Critically Essential Worker requirements, please talk to your line manager about whether you will be supported to come back to work. There is a [process](#) that needs to be followed to do this, including relevant delegate approval.

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
	ICU patients		Yesterday				
69	ICU not ventilated	ICU ventilated					
MN total	4	0	829	53	3	319	
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	10	136	0	5

Data as at 29/3/2022

**Metro North Health has 53 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.