

MESSAGE FROM THE METRO NORTH COVID-19 AND INFLUENZA HEALTH INCIDENT CONTROLLER

Metro North Health

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Dear colleagues,

- **Current situation**
- **Tier 3**
- **COVID testing**

Current situation

We currently have 820 active cases of COVID in our care, including 209 inpatients with 6 in ICU (3 ventilated). There are 611 patients in the Virtual Ward.

Today 732 staff are away from work due to either being COVID positive or requiring isolation due to being a close contact. This number does not include other types of sick leave. Additionally, 135 close contact staff have been able to return to work as Critical Essential workers.

Tier 3

Metro North is still in Tier 3 of our COVID-19 and Influenza Response Plan. Under Tier 3, we have suspended all non-urgent planned care and increased our PPE in clinical areas to a minimum of P2/N95 mask and protective eyewear.

Staff should avoid gathering in tea rooms and other shared spaces and where possible take your breaks outdoors.

From today all non-critical meetings and education are cancelled for the next four weeks. At the elbow clinical education and critical exams are supported. It is essential we create capacity to support frontline clinical care. This may include releasing staff to work in other areas as needed.

COVID testing

There are a number of private pathology providers who are doing COVID-19 PCR testing as well as four-plex testing (COVID, Influenza A & B, and RSV). Some providers will do a bulk billed test without a GP referral.

If you need a PCR, check the list on the [Queensland Government website](#) for a suitable provider near you. There are a range of in clinic and drive through services.

Staff can also get free Rapid Antigen Test kits via your line manager.

If you have had a PCR, please remember you cannot look up your own results (or those of someone you know) on Queensland Health systems. COVID test results will be texted to you. Results for influenza or RSV will be available on My Health Record (via My Health Record or your myGov account).

Useful links:

- People with respiratory symptoms can make an appointment (often same day) through [GP Respiratory Clinics](#).
- You can find a COVID vaccine provider using the [Department of Health COVID Vaccine Clinic Finder website](#).

Regards,

Louise O’Riordan

Metro North Health Incident Controller