

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

Metro North Health

Louise O'Riordan



**22 July 2022**

Dear colleagues,

- Current situation
- Tier 3
- Feedback
- COVID testing

### **Current situation**

We currently have 825 active cases of COVID in our care, including 202 inpatients with 5 in ICU (3 ventilated). There are 623 patients in the Virtual Ward.

Today 734 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, 130 close contact staff have been able to return to work as Critical Essential workers.

Additionally, we are caring for 6 inpatients with influenza, none in the ICU.

### **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.

Under Tier 3, please cease meetings not directly related to clinical care or staff wellbeing that involve clinical staff. Education and training is restricted to essential clinical training and examinations for clinical staff only until 18 August.

As we approach the predicted peak in the coming weeks, we need to create capacity to support frontline clinical care, including releasing staff to work in other areas as needed.

The [Metro North COVID-19 and Influenza Response Plan](#) has been updated to reflect these changes.

**Feedback**

Some lovely feedback this morning when a man phoned the ABC to tell them about his brilliant experience accessing COVID care.

After testing positive on a RAT, he came to the RBWH Emergency and Trauma Centre where he was provided antiviral medication. He was then treated in the Virtual Ward. He was very pleased with the whole experience. Well done, teams!

**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