

Metro North Health

# Message from the Executive Director STARS

Dale Dally-Watkins



Dear colleagues,

On Tuesday 10 September STARS held an R U OK? Day event to mark World Suicide Awareness Day and to raise awareness for the upcoming Day of Action. R U OK? Ambassador Jo Hassan took us through the steps to asking someone the question R U OK?, including important considerations such as having enough time to respond and making sure you are in a good place emotionally to provide someone else with support.

Participants also received goodie bags, KitKats and a raffle entry for R U OK? socks. Minty the therapy dog in training made a visit and was a real hit with the crowd. Thank you to Allison Welch and sponsor Ben Ballard for supporting the day, Jo Hassan for being our guest speaker and to all staff who attended.

This year the theme for R U OK? Day was 'Ask R U OK? Any Day', because life happens every day. For more information on R U OK? Any Day see [Metro North's extranet page](#). The extranet page includes an interview with Allison and Jo.



*Left - Staff Psychologist and Peer Responder Coordinator Allison Welch and Minty.*

*Right- Director of Nursing Ben Ballard, R U OK? Ambassador Jo Hassan and Allison Welch.*

## Tier 0 ARI

On Tuesday Metro North transitioned to Tier 0 in our Acute Respiratory Illness Response Plan due to a decline in both attendance and admissions for acute respiratory illnesses. Please continue to wear masks in clinical areas as per PPE guidelines, keep your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations up to date and stay home if you are unwell and inform your line manager using the Smart Leave form on MyHR.

Visitors will still be encouraged to wear masks, use hand sanitiser, and avoid the facility if they have respiratory symptoms. Masks and hand sanitiser will be available at facility entrances.

## Health Equity community consultation

Last Wednesday I attended a Metro North Health Equity community consultation event at Kallangur with Henry Nona. The event was well attended with over 150 people coming together to discuss the Health Equity Plan. Henry and I engaged with Elders and community members in relation to access, transport and workforce. We received valuable feedback which we will take back to the Executive Team to progress.

## 5-year outlook staff survey

STARS is currently developing a 5-year outlook, which provides a collective strategic direction for the priorities and actions we need to take over the next five years to provide safe and sustainable service models to meet the needs of our patient population, while supporting and building our workforce now and into the future.

A graphic for the STARS 5 Year Outlook Staff Survey. It features the text 'STARS' in a bold, black font with a speech bubble containing five stars (one red, four yellow) to its right. Below this is '5 Year Outlook' in a large, bold, black font. To the right of this text is a yellow speech bubble containing the words 'Staff Survey' in a bold, black font.

We would like to hear from you, our staff, on what you think your team and the facility needs to work on or focus on over the next five years.

If you could please take time to [fill out the staff survey](#), that would be much appreciated (approximately five minutes to complete). The survey will close on Friday 2 November 2024.

## Nominations for the Allied Health Professionals Awards

We recognise the crucial part allied health professionals (AHPs) play here at STARS – working together to reduce a person's impairments, supporting participation and function through goal directed rehabilitation.



We know that it takes a team to deliver holistic healthcare and so on **Monday October 14** we will be celebrating our allied health professionals at our inaugural AHPs Awards on the Terrace at 1pm.

### Categories include:

- Most innovative
- Emerging leadership
- Values in action

Please [nominate a valued AHP for an inaugural Allied Health Professionals Award here](#).

Nominations close COB Thursday 10 October.

## Caretaker period

Just a reminder that from 1 October we will be in caretaker period. While this period is business as usual there are certain conventions that we need to abide by including:

- No significant appointments
- No making or implementing major policy decisions that are likely to commit an incoming government, and
- No major contracts or undertakings.

Caretaker mode will remain in effect until the election result is clear, or in the event of a change of government, until the new government is sworn in.

For more information about the caretaker period and your responsibilities, read the [Guidelines on the Caretaker Conventions](#).

### **Virtual Emergency Care Service (VECS)**

The Virtual Emergency Care Service (VECS) provides Queenslanders with access to virtual unplanned and emergency care, providing an alternative to physically attending an emergency department. The governance for VECS is proposed to transition to STARS with a Business Case for Change currently under review with the Workforce Advisory Unity.

### **Staff changes**

Julie Mee who has been Acting Nursing Director for Surgery and Procedural Services is returning to TPC. I would like to thank her for contribution during her time with us at STARS. Terri McGrath will be acting in the role from 30 September.

### **Success for our PODSS team**

Our PODSS team recently received recognition from the Healthcare Improvement Unit for supporting well over 2,500 PODSS patients. What a wonderful milestone! PODSS, which began as a pilot at STARS, is now being rolled out across a number of hospital and health services, including Mackay, Cairns, Rockhampton, RBWH, PA and Ipswich Hospitals. Our staff's hard work in training many of the PODSS CNCs was also acknowledged. Thank you for sharing your expertise with others and helping expand this wonderful initiative.

### **August Staff Shout Outs**

Congratulations to the following staff and teams for receiving a Staff Shout Out for the month of August: Kate Horrigan, Katherine Chiu, Prue Batchelor, Lauren Doheny, Lorilee Malan, Qiaoling Meng (Jessie), Irene Fontanilla, Sunil Nair, Haylee Kajewski, Jessica Bartlett, Jake McIntosh, Ammie Janison, Jesseca Eglington, Oral Health Alliance CSSD team and Level 2 STARS Central Sterilising Unit.

If you would like to nominate someone for a Shout Out in September, [you can do so here](#). Recipients receive a congratulatory email and certificate acknowledging their achievement. Staff Shout Outs are a simple but effective way of acknowledging the great work of our colleagues.

### **Patient compliment**

*I attended STARS for a colonoscopy, the first time for such a procedure. Given the nature of the procedure I was uncertain about what would happen ... As soon as I started to have interactions with STARS I felt at ease - the information and videos, the call with the nurse at the start talking through the procedure and the follow-up call the day after. The level of care you provide is truly outstanding. On the day everyone I interacted with demonstrated a level of calm confidence that completely put me at ease. Obviously as a patient I only see part of how your teams operate, but what I did see looked like a great culture to be a part of and looked like one where everyone was happy to be working there. I hope you are all proud of what you do, you should be, everyone I had any dealings with was amazing.*

Kind regards,

**Dale Dally-Watkins**

Executive Director,

## Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS)

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which our facilities are built. We also pay respect and acknowledge Elders past, present and the future.



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Health



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