



Dear Colleagues,

Last Wednesday we held our inaugural Length of Service awards ceremony at STARS for those staff who had reached a 30-year-and-above milestone with Queensland Health. Congratulating staff for their length of service is an important part of celebrating and recognising our staff's achievements and these awards will now become an annual event on the STARS calendar.

Congratulations to the following staff:

**45 years**

Debra Martin.

**35 years**

Kevin Vandeleur  
Ann Birch  
Bruce Grieve  
Deborah Young  
Shellie Battaglone  
Lubo Beginov

**30 years**

Sheila Hammet  
Sarah McLean  
Rodney Marsh  
Alan Bateman  
Kana Appadurai  
Peter Russell  
Kylie McGrath  
Scott Parkinson  
Heidi Anderson

For staff who have reached five-to-25 year milestones, these certificates and badges will be given out at a local team level.

I would like to thank Ke-Sandra Layton-De-Silva and Adam Kent for all their work in identifying the recipients and organising the certificates and badges.

**Deadly Awards**

STARS staff were recently acknowledged in the Metro North Deadly Awards which recognise and celebrate work that improves health outcomes and achieves health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Congratulations to the Culturally Sensitive Endoscopy Pathway for receiving a Highly Commended in the 'High Performance – Trailblazer' category and Henry Nona for receiving a Highly Commended in the 'Capacity Building – Empowerment Champion' category.



### **Staff Breakfast**

Last Wednesday we also held our annual Christmas breakfast as a thank you for staff's hard work throughout the year. I hope many of you were able to attend and grab a breakfast muffin or croissant. Thank you to Ke-Sandra for organising the catering and our STARS Staff Council members for helping serve the food on the day.



### **STARS Public Cataract/Intraocular Lens Surgery Service**

Metro North patients are set to benefit from a 12-month trial of a new referral process for cataract surgery. STARS Deputy Director of Ophthalmology Dr Mark Loane and Orthoptics and Optometry Team Leader Paula Freijah found the current referral process of only using a vision test to determine eligibility for cataract surgery led to many patients not qualifying. After extensive consultations, the team have introduced an Visual Disability Assessment (VDA) questionnaire, which will increase patients' eligibility.

Well done to the team for introducing this initiative and improving the equity of access to cataract surgery. You can read more about the STARS Public Cataract/Intraocular Lens Surgery Service [here](#).

### **Ballet celebration**

Last Friday, I attended the last Dance Rehab session for the year, along with Metro North Chief Allied Health Practitioner Mark Butterfield, Executive Director Queensland Ballet Dilshani Weerasinghe and Director, QB Van Norton Li Community Health Institute Zara Gomes.

The Dance Rehab initiative is an innovative therapeutic dance program tailored to the unique needs of patients undergoing rehabilitation and treatment at STARS, in partnership with Queensland Ballet's Van Norton Li Community Health Institute. Since beginning in May this year, over 200 STARS patients have participated.

Thank you to Haylee Kajewski for all her work on getting this initiative off the ground and for all the support the allied health team have provided to patients to attend the weekly classes.

It is easy to see why the class is the highlight of many patients' week. You can read more about Dance Rehab [here](#).



### Peer Responder Development Day

Last Thursday, nine STARS Peer Responders proudly attended the annual Professional Development Day, joining 87 Peer Responders from across Metro North. The day included inspiring guest speakers from Metro North Pride and Shatter the Stigma who shared valuable insights on fostering inclusivity and reducing mental health stigma. There were also mindful activities led by the staff psychology team, an engaging presentation from the Social, Emotional & Wellbeing ABTI team and an appearance from Minty the therapy dog in training.

Thank you to everyone who attended the day to increase their knowledge and skills to help support our workforce.

At STARS, the Peer Responder program has grown significantly, with 35 registered Peer Responders—up from 22 last year. With one Peer Responder for every 71 staff members across Metro North wide, STARS is always seeking more passionate individuals to join this impactful initiative.

If you're interested in becoming a Peer Responder you can email your interest to [mnpeerresponder@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:mnpeerresponder@health.qld.gov.au).



### **Junior doctor recruitment video**

Congratulations to Dr Jeremy Williamson (Ophthalmology) and Paris Hoey (Gastroenterology) who were among a number of Metro North staff featured in a recent Metro North recruitment video. The video is promoting Metro North Hospital and Health Service to junior doctors and is featured on Metro North's career page as well as relevant job ads. Thank you for representing STARS and Metro North.

You can view the full video [here](#).

### **Christmas spirit at STARS**

The ground floor lobby is looking particularly Christmassy with the installation of our beautiful Christmas tree, courtesy of the RBWH Foundation. Many areas of the hospital are also decorated as part of the annual decorating competition (see below). On Tuesday, we were treated to Lois and her fellow carol singers who performed across STARS for the enjoyment of patients and staff. Thank you to everyone for bringing the Christmas spirit to STARS - it really does make such a difference to patients, their families and visitors at this time of year.



### **STARS Christmas decorating competition**

On Tuesday I had the pleasure of judging the annual STARS Christmas decorating competition. This year we had two themes, Aussie Christmas and STARS Circus. It was so wonderful to see everyone's interpretations of the themes and the amount of effort that went into the decorations. There were some very creative and also sustainable decorations. Sadly, there can only be one winner!

Congratulations to this year's winner Ward 5B with their Aussie Christmas theme.

Their winners receive a hamper, kindly donated by the RBWH Foundation, the very coveted trophy, designed and made by Rehabilitation Engineering and the chance to pick one of next year's decorating themes.

Highly Commended for this year goes to PACU 1 and Ward 5A.

For more photos of the competition entries see today's email about the winners.



### November Staff Shout Outs

November was a bumper month for Staff Shout Outs. Thank you for continuing to use the Metro North Staff Shout Out nominations as a way of recognising staff that put the Metro North Values into action.

Congratulations to the following staff and teams for receiving a November Staff Shout Out:

Kate Qi, Courtenay Lind, Kaitlyn McMahon, Jamie Scott, Caitlin Fraser, Ammie Janison, Talia Hosking, Hannah Kujanpaa, George Montford, Morgan-Leigh Taylor, Renaye Halliday, Ashlee Downs, Georgia Coburn, Benjamin Frost, Andrew Jesberg, Roshny Kurian, Apala Seeto, Luke Klisanin, Melanie

Ferguson, Lily Smith, Rebecca Pickering, Gaelyn Garnett, Ben Hay, Marcia Lear, Jordan Nelson, Samantha Waterhouse, Medical Typing Team, Ward 5B team, PACU 1 nurses, Surgery and Procedural Services Team, Nursing-Clinical Teaching Fellows (CTF) across all units, STARS Day Rehabilitation Team.

If you would like to nominate a staff member or team for a December Staff Shout Out you can do so [here](#).

### **Patient compliment**

*My wife has been an inpatient at STARS on three occasions this year. On every occasion her experience of your hospital has been excellent. Every member of staff, medical and administrative, has been caring and kind. The facilities are wonderful as is the food.*

Kind regards

Dale Dally-Watkins