



December 2024

Welcome to the December edition of the Managers Memo, focusing on **wellbeing**.

Wellbeing for our workforce is a key area that came out of the 2023 Have Your Say survey, and is not just a fluffy term when talking about being healthy. To ensure our people have a good wellbeing, we need to consider work design, rostering and allowing our people access to the supports on offer.

As per our [Metro North Wellbeing Framework](#), wellbeing incorporates our **physical, mental, social, financial** and **workplace** state – all of which can have a huge impact on how we show up for work.

People and Culture are in the process of finalising new culture and wellbeing extranet pages, that can be easily accessed by phone or a computer. However, until these are ready, you can find many of the resources and an abundance of information below, to help you prioritise the wellbeing of yourself and your team. **Please share this information with your staff.**

If we have happy, high performing employees, we will have the best outcomes for our patients.

Business benefits when you invest in wellbeing

There are numerous reasons why investing in employee health and wellbeing makes good business sense – after all, healthy workers = healthy organisations = healthy business performance. But beyond this case for high performance, supporting the wellbeing of our people is simply the right thing to do. It reflects our commitment to creating a workplace where everyone feels valued, supported and empowered to thrive.

Investing in wellbeing:

- Fosters a culture of compassion and respect
- Empowers employees and contributes to a sense of purpose and belonging
- Improves work performance and productivity
- Reduces costs associated with absenteeism, presenteeism and workers' compensation
- Retains existing employees and attracts new talented employees

Furthermore, according to a **2019 study by the Australian National University (ANU)**, workplace wellbeing programs, including mental health support, mindfulness, and stress management training, saw an average return of **\$2.30 for every \$1 invested**.

At Metro North we have various wellbeing services and offerings for our staff. Some are listed below, and you can find more information on [QHEPS](#).



As a line manager, one of the the best things you can do for your team, the organisation, and our patients, is to promote and prioritise personal, proactive wellbeing in the workplace. For support with this, reach out to the [Culture & Wellbeing team](#).

MENTAL WELLBEING

Peer responders for managers – you need support too!

In a recent survey at TPCB, it showed that staff felt more supported just knowing the peer responder program exists, even if they haven't used it yet. This shows the benefit to managers of having a peer responder in your local team.



But, remember peer responders aren't only for your staff – they are for you too! We have several **peer responders at a manager level** who are able to give you peer-to-peer support with any challenges you may be having, that they will likely have dealt with too. You can search peer responders and their job titles on [QHEPS](#) and choose to speak with one at your local facility or even online at a different location.

If you missed it in the September issue, watch the manager-focused peer responder short video and read the manager FAQs on [QHEPS](#).

Psychological first aid training

Like medical first aid, psychological first aid (PFA) skills require training before they can be applied.

In 2025, there will be two PFA courses on offer – one for all staff and one for managers. If all employees are familiar and trained in PFA, our workforce will be better supported to deal with the challenges that come with working in healthcare, as well as everyday life.

Psychological first aid – all staff training

An evidence-informed conversational approach designed to help individuals reduce distress after a traumatic experience. [Register here](#)

Psychological first aid – manager training

This workshop equips managers with the skills and knowledge to effectively navigate conversations with their staff around stress and distress in the workplace. [Register here](#)

Key objectives of PFA:

Reduce distress

Make people feel safe and secure

Assist with current needs

Help individuals reconnect with themselves and their support network

Help reduce risk factors of mental illness as a result of an event.

TELUS Health offers 24/7 phone support

Metro North partners with Employee Assistance Provider (EAP), [TELUS](#) to provide our people with ongoing, 24/7 support.

TELUS services are available to not only staff but direct family members as well, with the program offering counselling and support to address a range of personal and professional challenges.

Employees and family members can call **1800 360 364** and talk to experienced, caring professionals in confidence 24/7, as well as receive care plans that suit your needs.

Support for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff

There is also an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander support line where an employee can speak to a clinician who identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or has lots of experience working with Mob in the city and remote communities, it's your choice. This service can be available face-to-face or via telephone on **1800 816 152**. [Find out more](#).

VALUES IN ACTION

Our staff wellbeing support network

At Metro North, we have five tiers of staff support available to meet your needs.

RUOK?
Live the Values, stay connected and be there for each other.
MNValues@health.qld.gov.au

Teammate support

Peer Responders
Confidential peer support through listening, understanding and linking to appropriate support options.
MNPeerResponder@health.qld.gov.au

Staff Psychology Service
Confidential and effective psychological support for teams and individuals.
MNStaffPsychology@health.qld.gov.au

TELUS Health - EAP
Free, high quality, confidential support for staff and their immediate families.

QHEPS wellbeing resources

Cultural, social, emotional and mental wellbeing support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
A_TSILTclinical_innovation_strategyMNH@health.qld.gov.au

People and Culture Programs

Metro North Health | Queensland Government

SOCIAL WELLBEING

The [Queensland Mental Health Commission's Trauma Strategy 2024–2029](#) is an interesting read and a document all line managers should familiarise themselves with working in healthcare.

The strategy states that **Trauma can impact the way a person thinks, feels and interacts with others**, which also may impact a person's relationships with others and influence their help-seeking and engagement with support. The below graphic was taken from the report in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Prevalence and impact of trauma

First Nations



Older First Nations members
of the Stolen Generation
are more likely to face
**adverse health and
wellbeing outcomes**
compared to their peers
who were not removed
from their families.⁴⁰

In communities with higher cultural
and social engagement among
First Nations people—marked by
increased participation in cultural events,
ceremonies and community activities
—young people experienced a

37% lower
suicide rate.⁴¹

Supporting the wellbeing of your Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members

New employee journey tool

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members can at times experience [cultural load](#) within their workplace. Support their wellbeing by sharing the [Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Journey](#) tool with them.

This tool provides information on support services and lots more.

Better Together Staff Gathering

Another great support network is the Metro North Health Better Together Staff Gathering.

Encourage your staff to [attend](#) the **next Better Together Staff Gathering** event on **5 December** in Zillmere, allowing for important cultural connections with colleagues and the ability to support each other within the workplace.



Middle manager in-service training

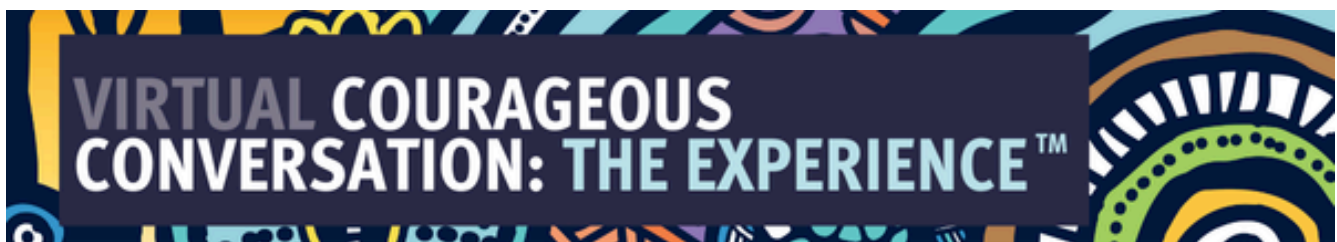
The Metro North Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Program is now delivering middle manager in-service training.

The training is designed to equip middle managers with the tools to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers within their teams and across the health service.

The face-to-face in-service training covers:

- cultural safety
- family and kinship structure
- cultural complexities when supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

For more information on upcoming training sessions and how to register - search 'Social and Emotional Wellbeing Program' via [TMS](#).



Virtual Courageous Conversation: The Experience™ (VCC) is an online learning experience that provides participants with a way to talk about race, intentionally and effectively.

Core workshop topics and concepts

- Courageous Conversation Protocol
- Racial Identity Development and Practice
- (De)Constructing Systemic Racism
- Decolonisation through Building Racial Consciousness

How to register

- Register through the Talent Management System (TMS)
- Search via TMS 'Virtual Courageous Conversation: The Experience' to enrol in a class
- 79 spots available and 80 waitlist spots available

For additional information, please contact Andrew via ATSILT_CapacityBuilding@health.qld.gov.au



Kindness at work

Recently the Chief Executive announced Metro North Health is partnering with the Hush Foundation on their kindness program.



We acknowledge our healthcare staff and patients face tough challenges every day. However, feeling valued and cared for makes a big difference and kindness can be used as a way to foster resilience and positive interactions with each other and our patients.

We know:

- Over 50% of healthcare workers report experiencing burnout.
- Up to 70% of medical errors are linked to poor communication, often worsened by stress, burnout, and incivility.
- The Australian healthcare and social assistance industries have seen the highest number of serious claims for work-related mental health conditions over the past five years.

When kindness is part of our work and our everyday interactions, everyone benefits. Watch this space as work is being done to roll out the Kindness in Action program in the coming months. Catch-up on the webinar recordings from the recent [Kindness Works Here Week](#).

Social clubs at each facility



Social wellbeing is achieved when we can create and maintain healthy relationships with the people around us, building supportive and meaningful networks.

If you or your staff member want to get more involved socially at work, each directorate has their own version of a social club that people can join. These social identities inspire Metro North staff to proudly represent the facilities in which they work. Find out more below.

- [Corporate Crew](#) (Metro North Corporate team)
- [Caring Together](#) (Caboolture, Kilcoy and Woodford) – Email: caringtogether@health.qld.gov.au
- [We are STARS](#) (STARS) – Email: STARSmetroNorth@health.qld.gov.au
- [I am Redcliffe](#) (Redcliffe)
- [Connecting Care for Better Health](#) (COH) – Email: ed_coh@health.qld.gov.au
- [Team Royal](#) (RBWH)
- [Culture Council](#) (TPCH) – Email: execdir-tpch@health.qld.gov.au

WORKPLACE WELLBEING

Lead by example

As a manager, you play a key role in supporting your teams and ensuring they have access to the tools and opportunities to manage their individual wellbeing. Below are some practical ways **YOU** can focus on workplace wellbeing.

Promote access to the various wellbeing options in this email such as coaching, CLE courses, Fitness Passport, Telus and the dedicated Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee support.

Lead by example by modelling good wellbeing practices like taking breaks and balancing your work/life commitments. This sends a strong message to your team that it should be a priority for everyone.

Take time to recharge and access your leave regularly. This will help you be the best you can be and also show your team that taking leave is important and supported.

Encourage Flexible work practices where operationally possible. Consider how flexible work arrangements such as adjusted start/finish times, job share or hybrid work options might help your team manage competing demands. Even small adjustments can make a big difference.

Enlist in a wellbeing coach

Did you know **all** Metro North staff members, no matter what level or location, **can connect with a Metro North coach** for up to six confidential and complimentary coaching sessions?

With 24 new coaches on board (we now have a total of 41) we have a broad range of skill sets and passions on offer to help you and your team members achieve your goals and reach the next level.

Wellbeing is one reason you may look to a coach for help and we have several coaches who specialise in this area. For **Lenore Wasaga**, cultural wellbeing is one of the main reasons she wanted to become a coach.

Meet Lenore – Metro North professional coach

Lenore Wasaga has worked for Queensland Health for over 30 years and has extensive knowledge in the area of Indigenous health (both urban and rural and remote settings).

"My passion for elevating my mob to live healthier and more fulfilling lives is the reason for becoming a Metro North coach.

Wellbeing needs to be a priority for all staff, but especially for our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander team members who often have a higher cultural load.

When I think about wellbeing, I think holistically. It's not just about the physical health because you can't have that without a calm and content mind, along with social connection.

I'm excited to use the coaching relationship to empower my mob to take control of their future stories, with a big focus on wellbeing."

You can find Lenore's full coaching profile on [QHEPS](#), along with other coach bios and more information about the program and how to apply.



CLE training

The Centre for Leadership Excellence (CLE) unit have released statewide courses for the remainder of this financial year. Along with some other great development opportunities, CLE offer two wellbeing courses, designed to improve workplace wellbeing. [Find out more information and register.](#)

Wellbeing and resilience

Cultivate practices that support wellbeing and help you to thrive in the workplace. Develop a resilience plan and know where to access additional support.

Wellbeing leadership

Discover the COPE framework for communicating with team members about their wellbeing and explore practical tools to support a healthy and supportive team culture.

Taking time to recharge is crucial to wellbeing

Your leadership in creating a supportive, flexible and wellbeing-focused workplace is essential to making MNH a great place to be. Everyone needs time to rest and rejuvenate to be the best they can be at their job.

There are various resources for managers and employees around leave, entitlements and excessive leave on [QHEPS](#).

In the Have Your Say (HYS) survey, unplanned leave stood out as an ongoing cause for concern and after active participation in the HYS action group, new information and resources are soon to be released for managers and employees to access – to better manage and prepare for unplanned leave. Keep your eye out! There are some great tools for having wellbeing conversations and managing difficult situations relating to leave.



PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Fitness Passport

Physical fitness can contribute directly to the other domains in the wellbeing framework, particularly mental and social wellbeing.

We want Metro North staff to find the fun in fitness, devote time to self-care and be their best selves. Fitness Passport gives you unparalleled access to a wide range of facilities for a fraction of the price of a traditional gym membership. [Find out more.](#)

Fitness Passport elevates workplace wellbeing!



FITNESS
passport.

The results from the recent annual survey are in – increased physical activity equals a healthier, happier workplace.



59

32% Improved mood and morale



52

38% Less stress



44

51% Enhanced mental clarity



40

19% Increased productivity



29

95% Better Injury prevention



24

72% Reduced sick leave

Occupational violence prevention

Physical wellbeing isn't just about fitness, it also means staying safe from harm. At Metro North we recognise that occupational violence is a significant challenge in healthcare and we are committed to doing everything we can as an organisation to minimise risk and protect our staff.

The recent OVP roadshow has just wrapped up and learnings and outcomes will be shared with the organisation in the new year.

There are currently 440 OVP face-to-face training courses on TMS for 2025 across Metro North (RBWH 2025 sessions coming soon with a new training room location).

Please don't wait for your OVP training to expire and book into refresher training as soon as possible. And remember, the [OV Incident Response Kit - Employee Toolkit](#) is accessible on every Metro North desktop computer.

Unacceptable Behaviour – Discharge from Care Procedure

Nobody should accept OV as 'part of the job' and yours and our patients' safety is our priority.

Metro North has an [Unacceptable Behaviour – Discharge from Care Procedure](#) that provides a structured framework for staff to work with senior clinicians to discharge a patient from care when there is an immediate risk of harm to themselves or others. The procedure includes a rapid assessment, employing de-escalation strategies and a critical risk assessment before a patient is discharged.

You can find out more on [QHEPS](#) and watch the new video to familiarise yourself with the procedure.

FINANCIAL WELLBEING

Financial stress can impact your wellbeing

One of the domains of wellbeing is 'financial wellbeing' and this is often overlooked when we think about being 'well'. Coming up to Christmas, this is a great time to have financial wellbeing on your radar for your team. If you or a staff member are experiencing financial stress, think about accessing some of the support services below.

Telus Health

Telus Health offers free financial counselling for all Metro North members. You can access the service by calling 1300 360 364 (24 hours) and booking a phone appointment. You can have up to 6 confidential financial counselling sessions for you or an immediate family member. [Find out more](#).

Super funds

QSuper and other super funds usually offer a financial advisory service for their customers. Look into what your super fund offers as you may have access to some free financial advice this way.

[QSuper](#) also has a bank of learning resources on topics like 'costs of aged care', 'being a carer', as well as 'financial wellbeing for women'. You can find out more on the [FinFit webpage](#).

National Debt Helpline

This [website](#) has guides and resources to help those in debt, and also a phone number for further advice (1800 007 007).

MoneySmart

The [MoneySmart](#) website offers access to financial counselling, urgent help with money when in crisis, savings and budget planning tools, managing low incomes or options when struggling to pay bills.

Centrelink Services

For those who are eligible, [Centrelink](#) offers financial assistance, family payments and emergency support options.

We would love to know if this Managers Memo was valuable to you. Is there something you'd like to see in a future edition?

Provide your feedback

Missed an edition?

All previous Managers Memos are available on the [Metro North Staff Extranet](#).

Please [contact us](#) if you would like some **news from your team** included in the Managers Memo.

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