



Dear Colleagues,

It has been a busy week, especially with the humidity and temperature issues on Level 2 on Wednesday. I would like to thank everyone for working through the numerous issues, including postponing and rescheduling surgeries and dealing with affected drugs and consumables in the stock room. Thank you to all those staff who liaised with the impacted patients, many of whom would have been expecting to have their surgery before Christmas, and for those staff who worked extra hours.

Tier 1 ARI

On Tuesday, Metro North moved to a Tier 1 from Tier 0 on the Acute Respiratory Illnesses response plan, due to the recent increase in community transmission of COVID-19.

To keep yourself, your family and patients safe, please

- Continue wearing masks in clinical areas in line with PPE guidelines.
- Ensure your flu/COVID vaccinations and fit testing are up to date. If you require vaccinating contact the Infection Management and Prevention Service (IMPS).
- Stay home if you are feeling unwell, notify your line manager, and submit your leave request promptly via the Smart Leave form on MyHR.
- If you test positive to COVID please let us know as soon as possible via the [online form](#) and [when you return to work](#).
- If you are identified as a close contact, don a surgical mask at work for 5 days, complete a RAT test every second day for 5 days, and do not attend work if symptomatic, even if negative on a RAT test.
- Encourage visitors to wear a surgical mask, perform good hand hygiene and refrain from visiting if they are unwell.
- Include a Teams link as an option for all meetings.

Summer weather

We have been experiencing some very wet weather already this summer and predictions are for above average rainfall and warmer than average temperatures. The catchments in the southeast are saturated and so even a moderate amount of rainfall could result in flash flooding.

To keep up to date with weather warning notifications please download the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) alerts app on your phone and turn on the notifications for weather events in our region.

Metro North Health has created an extranet site to keep staff across our [emergency and disaster response activities](#). The site includes links to useful resources, including information on heatwave, bushfire, flooding and storms.

For general information about preparing your home and family for extreme weather and natural disaster events, visit [Get Ready Queensland](#).

STARS Gazer newsletter

The December issue of the STARS Gazer [newsletter is now available](#). You can read about some of the great initiatives taking place here at STARS and profiles of our wonderful staff. If you have an article idea for a future STARS Gazer you can email it to metronorth-stars-communication@health.qld.gov.au.

Hampers for patients

On Wednesday, our patients received beautiful Christmas hampers donated by Kingdomcity. This lovely gesture was well received by patients on wards 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, and 6A.

Thank you to the RBWH Foundation for liaising with Kingdomcity and our staff to facilitate the delivery of the hampers to patients.

Grinch visits

You may have seen the Grinch and Santa around STARS this week, visiting different areas across STARS and the Herston campus, spreading awareness about the Peer Responder program.

Thank you to Allison Welch and Scott Gillies for dressing up as the Grinch and Santa to spread a little Christmas cheer.



Safe Christmas decoration removal

Thank you everyone who participated in this year's Christmas Decorating Competition at STARS. The decorations really contribute to a festive spirit for patients, families, visitors and staff. If you are packing away the decorations before the holidays, please be extra careful when taking them down to limit any potential damage to surfaces.

Acting ED arrangements

This year has been a very busy one for all staff at STARS. For those of you who have time off over the Christmas and New Year break, I hope you can find some time for rest and relaxation and to catch up with your family and friends. If you are working during the break, thank you so very much for continuing to care for our patients or for keeping our service operating.

Lastly, I am taking two weeks leave from the 23 December, returning on the 6 January 2025. During this time Daniel Francis will be A/ED STARS. Daniel is currently the Director of Metro North Public Health Unit. Please make him feel welcome.

Wishing you and your families a joyful holiday season and a happy, healthy New Year.

Dale Dally-Watkins.