



Dear colleagues,

On Tuesday, Metro North and RBWH stood down our emergency operations centres in response to ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred. While the work to manage the impacts from the severe weather event are far from over, I would like to sincerely thank and acknowledge our staff who went above and beyond to ensure we can continue to provide kind and compassionate care for our community. I am also deeply appreciative of the support you have given to each other during this uncertain time.

Many of you were required to make a series of decisions, which may have involved being away from your homes and families to stay overnight at work. I am extremely grateful for the efforts you've made with so many barriers in front of you. I am also grateful to your personal support networks who have played a key role in ensuring our staff could continue to attend work and care for our patients.

Our multi-disciplinary managers and leaders throughout the organisation have led our response with great energy, common sense and compassion. As with any crisis, communications is a challenge and our leaders stepped up to effectively communicate what needed to happen for their teams.

Our Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and staff implementing their direction did an outstanding job steering the RBWH through the challenges that arose over the 5-6 days. Dr Mark Mattiussi and Dr Samantha Simpson, our Incident Controllers deserve special thanks. I would also like to provide a special shout out to the teams who prepared accommodation and food for our staff who stayed overnight – it was truly amazing to see what could happen with a tight deadline and a lot of determination.

I wanted to share some observations that the other leaders and I made over the past week from throughout the hospital:

- Patient care continued to be very important and it was clear that community safety was also on the minds of all staff.
- Staff were deeply appreciative of the accommodation, affectionately named “Alfie’s Austere Staff Retreat” and how well it was organised. Many staff commented that it was like having a slumber party with their friends.
- Staff were impressed by the high standard of food, with one staff member particularly ecstatic to find out it was free!
- Staff appeared very happy to have the opportunity to actually talk with their colleagues as the wards were not as busy.
- Recognising that many staff worked double shifts and so many volunteered to spend the night at the hospital between night shifts. Thank you.
- Bright scrubs are very cheery in a cyclone! Every ward was a kaleidoscope.
- The sense of community and mateship among our staff was high. Many staff stepped up to help their colleagues who lost power or were unable to get to work due to flooding.



*Just some of the many amazing staff who assisted with the staff accommodation and food in the past week.*

In the coming weeks, our EOC will be conducting a debrief and lessons learnt session, so we can improve our response next time. We are conducting an All Staff Forum today, including an overview of our response and a Q and A with our Incident Commander Mark Mattiussi and other leaders.

I would like to finish with some consumer feedback from over the weekend:

*“Much appreciation and thanks for all the effort from staff to keep the service running. Coming to work in such dreadful conditions to take care of your patients is truly awesome, but you are all awesome anyway. It was really heartening to see a manager in with the troops. Just to remind you all again, you are all valued and appreciated so much. You are so much more than ‘just staff doing your job’.”*

Thank you for all that you do to support our community.

Kind regards,

**Louise Oriti**

Executive Director,

Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital

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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