

Executive Message

Metro North Health



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this message contains the name and image of a deceased person.

Summary:

- Celebrating achievements
- Executive updates
- Organisational priorities
- Leadership priorities
- Honouring Songwoman and Elder
- Engagement for Herston Precinct Operational Service Governance Review

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Acting Chief Executive Stephen Eaton



Audience: All staff



Read time: 4 min



For: Information

Hi Everyone,

It's hard to believe I've been with Metro North for a year now. I want to thank everyone who helped me get up to speed quickly when I arrived, particularly SET and the Operational Leadership Team. It's a privilege to undertake the Chief Operating Officer role; the scale of Metro North is significant and I've enjoyed getting to see the inner workings of the organisation. There are always going to be challenges in public healthcare and I'm immensely proud of the way we work together to continue delivering vital care to the community.



Celebrating achievements

This week the Governor-General announced the Australia Day Honours. Congratulations to Metro North's recipients:

- **Associate Professor Anthony Lynham AO** received the Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to trauma medicine as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, to the Parliament of Queensland, and to the community.
- **Dr Jason Brown PSM** was awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding public service to support clinical outcomes for burns patients and digital health transformation in Queensland.

Community and Oral Health's Ronald Aquilina was also honoured with a Mayor's Community Spirit Award by the City of Moreton Bay for his volunteer work with the SES.

Executive updates

As mentioned in a CE message in December, Dr Liz Rushbrook is currently leading a piece of work for the Chief Executive to help us work better across hospital boundaries. Dr Luis Prado is acting Chief Medical Officer until the end of March.

We have also welcomed Jodi Hallas back to Metro North as Executive Director Health Service Strategy and Planning. Jodi brings extensive experience in healthcare service planning and strategy, most recently in the Department of Health as Executive Director Systems Planning Branch and Acting Deputy Director-General Clinical Planning and Service Strategy.

Organisational priorities

One of the big focus areas for Metro North Health is delivering care closer to home. It's one of the key guiding principles, along with developing models of care for the growing and ageing population and maximising our infrastructure capacity and capability. These principals were endorsed by the Board this week for our Health Services Plan 2026-41.

An example of this is expanding out of hospital care. Building new hospitals takes time, so we need to look at how we can do things differently to ensure we're continuing to meet the needs of our community. There's already a lot of great work happening in this area such as the QAS falls co-responder program which has a Metro North clinician responding to call outs alongside our ambulance colleagues. This program was introduced a few years ago and has seen excellent results in hospital avoidance, connecting people to community-based healthcare services. This program and opportunities to further strengthen our partnership were discussed with the QAS Assistant Commissioner and Deputy Medical Director at the Board meeting.

We also heard from Queensland Health Deputy Director-General Peta Bryant and Associate Professor Glen Kennedy on the cancer service planning underway including the Centre of Excellence and the Queensland Cancer Centre. As the Chair and CE mentioned last week, capital infrastructure and delivering the Hospital Rescue Plan continue to be a key focus.

Leadership priorities

In a message last year I talked about my leadership priorities, including enhancing our service delivery as one Metro North. To achieve this, we need to recognise the value to staff and patients of the unique qualities of our hospitals and directorates and look for opportunities to work together as a network. Thinking as one Metro North means eliminating barriers to equitable access to care by working as a whole organisation, not as silos. This is also reflected in the Sustainability Plan work, identifying the most effective uses of our resources so we can deliver on our commitment to safe, high quality accessible health care. In my conversations with staff, there are a huge number of ideas and opportunities we can build on to continue to position Metro North as recognised leader in healthcare in our global region.

I hope to see you at a staff forum or event this year.

Regards,
Stephen

Executive Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Adj. Prof. Sherry Holzapfel



Audience: All staff



Read time: 2 min



For: Information

IN LOVING MEMORY,

Maroochy Barambah

Songwoman and Turrbal Elder

12 Feb 1955 – 28 Jan 2026

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great sadness that I share the news of the passing of respected Elder and Turrbal Traditional Owner, Songwoman Aunty Maroochy Barambah, earlier this week.

Aunty Maroochy was a deeply respected Turrbal Elder whose presence, knowledge, and

cultural authority have guided and strengthened our community for decades. As a Traditional Songwoman and strong knowledge holder, she carried responsibilities of profound significance, sharing culture with dignity, generosity, and unwavering commitment. She was a pioneering leader and a steady matriarch whose influence extended far beyond her immediate circles. Her dedication to community, her advocacy, and her work to uphold cultural continuity have left a lasting imprint within our region and across Australia.

Aunty Maroochy has been a long-standing advocate and supporter of Metro North Health, contributing significantly to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health across our organisation. Her contributions include gifting Traditional Turrbal names to our facilities, delivering Welcome to Country ceremonies, and generously sharing her wisdom, cultural teachings, and guidance with services and staff.

Many of you will have had the privilege of hearing Aunty Maroochy offer a Welcome to Country or share her stories through song. These moments were profoundly moving, and it was a genuine honour to witness the depth of culture and generosity she brought to every interaction. I am deeply grateful to have received even a small part of the knowledge she chose to share with me and with our staff.

Aunty Maroochy's family would like to acknowledge and thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, nursing, and medical staff at Redcliffe Hospital for their outstanding and compassionate support throughout Aunty's journey to the Dreaming.

We will fly the Aboriginal flag at half-mast across our facilities on the day of the funeral to honour the loss of a significant and highly respected Elder within our community.

I extend my deepest condolences and thoughts to her daughters, Baringa and Kulkarawa, her grandson Dalapai, and the extended family.

Our organisation honours Aunty Maroochy's life, her leadership, and the legacy she leaves in the hearts, minds, and work of so many. She will also be remembered for her lifetime of cultural and artistic contribution, a legacy that will continue to live on through her family, her community, and throughout Metro North Health's hospitals, services, and facilities.

Kind regards,
Sherry

Image sourced and owned by Turrbal Dippil

Executive Lead, Herston Precinct Operational Services Governance Review

Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook



Audience: All staff



Read time: 2 min



For: Action

Dear Colleagues,

As part of the *Herston Precinct Operational Service Governance Review*, I have commenced the information gathering stage through attending performance, executive, and governance meetings across all Herston-based Directorates and Services. This review aims to assess and

strengthen operational governance arrangements to ensure they are contemporary and fit for purpose to deliver our Healthcare services for the next decade and beyond.

From next week until 20 February, I will be meeting with key stakeholders to gather insights and perspectives critical to this review. This includes Executive, Medical, Nursing, Allied Health and Admin Leads across Service Lines and Clinical Units. I am also very keen to meet individuals who work in and around or closely with services delivered from the Herston Precinct (particularly those who work within Metro North). Your perspective will be invaluable in shaping the outcomes of this review and ensuring it reflects the needs of our teams and services.

I encourage individuals and groups to contribute their input by either emailing me directly with that input or to request an appointment, to Elizabeth.Rushbrook@health.qld.gov.au. I look forward to being potentially 'overwhelmed' with input.

From the 20 February, I will be taking some time to collate the input and mature a first draft report for further consultation in early March 2026.

Thank you for your cooperation and support. I look forward to hearing from you in the short term.

Kind regards,
Liz

Metro North Health



We uphold our commitment to health equity through our Values in Action
Respect | Integrity | Compassion | High Performance | Teamwork



Metro North Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land upon which we live, work and walk, and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

Metro North Health's vision

Creating healthier futures together—where innovation and research meets compassionate care and community voices shape our services.



Queensland
Government

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