

Executive Message

Metro North Health



Summary:

- Executive recruitment
- Defining our values
- Submit a video for Employee Appreciation Day
- qRefer go live

Message feedback

Chief Executive Nick Steele



Audience: All staff



Read time: 5+ min



For: Action

Hi Everyone,

This week, I attended the Queensland Media Club event where the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services outlined the Government's vision for Queensland's health system.

Key highlights from the address included:

- **Strengthening health infrastructure** – with a focus on expanding hospital capacity, investing in new facilities, and improving emergency departments, elective surgery access, ambulance services, and health workforce support.
- **Real-time health system data and transparency** – aimed at helping Queenslanders make more informed decisions about where to seek care.
- **Improving patient outcomes** – through reducing wait times, boosting ambulance response capacity, and expanding healthcare services closer to where people live.
- **Addressing system pressures** – including tackling staffing challenges, reducing ambulance ramping, and managing increasing demand across the health system.



The Minister emphasised the Government's commitment to building a more responsive, transparent, and sustainable health system for all Queenslanders.

As Queensland's largest health service, Metro North has an important role in helping position the state as a world leader in health care. The quality of the care we deliver to a very large and diverse community has a significant impact on the health outcomes of Queenslanders more broadly. We are in a position where other health services across the state and nation should be looking to us for leadership in terms of our clinical care delivery, research and innovation, training and education, and our workforce.

The week, Queensland Health released Queensland's first Medical Workforce Wellbeing Survey, which included more than 2,000 responses from across the state.

The results provide important insights:

- Participants ranked workload as the key workplace driver most negatively impacting their wellbeing, followed by organisational processes, resources, culture, support and supervision, and professional development.
- Among the changes the medical workforce would like to see were increased staffing, more flexible work arrangements, and improved access to leave and relief cover.
- Rates of fulfilment were significantly higher in rural and remote locations compared to metropolitan and regional areas.

These findings highlight the need for both system-wide and local responses to create meaningful and sustainable improvement. Metro North will analyse the findings in detail and identify what initiatives we can take in this space.

As I've shared in my recent messages, positive change requires staff voices to be heard and to be central to how we design and implement new ways of working. By listening to you and working together, we can strengthen workplace safety and satisfaction while delivering high-quality outcomes for our patients.

This is an exciting time to be part of Metro North Health. There are significant opportunities ahead to transform how we work and to strengthen our leadership position. You are central to this process, and I look forward to continuing to work with you as we build a stronger health service—one that supports you to deliver the very best outcomes for our patients and our community.

CKW visit

Yesterday, I was at Caboolture Hospital meeting and talking to staff and members of the executive team to learn more about some of the challenges with ambulance offload and some of the critical opportunities we have to improve our performance for the benefit of our residents. I thank the team for their candour in sharing ideas and suggestions about how we can do things better. Feedback from frontline staff is invaluable in helping us understand the issues and what we need to do to address them. Similar discussions will take place in other Metro North facilities during the coming few weeks.

New research grants

I also had the pleasure of attending a special event hosted by the RBWH Foundation, highlighting its commitment to innovators and researchers across RBWH and STARS through grants. I was particularly happy to learn that one of the key focus areas was the introduction of a new grant to foster and support emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers. The grants offer an opportunity to work in partnership with community members to identify and develop new ideas in healthcare that increase access to services, develop culturally safe models of care and eliminate racial discrimination. These grants will empower staff who understand the needs of patients and community to deliver quality and timely research that will lead to better health outcomes. Applications open on 1 March. More information is available [here](#).



(Pictured with RBWH Foundation CEO Simone Garske and Roslyn Boland, Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, RBWH)

Executive recruitment

Recently Metro North commenced recruitment for a new Chief Allied Health Practitioner following Mark Butterworth's retirement. This week we launched the process for our new Chief People and Culture Officer. I'm sure we'll get a lot of interest in both roles. I'll keep you updated on the progress.

Bringing our values to life with a refreshed framework

Insights from the 2023 Have Your Say survey showed that while our values matter deeply —*Respect, Teamwork, Compassion, High Performance, and Integrity*—they were not always clearly defined or consistently experienced across the organisation. In response, as part of the 2025 Have Your Say survey, staff voted on refreshed value definitions, and after extensive consultation the winning definitions have helped inform practical examples of what our values look like in action.

Also included, and heavily consulted on, was a new overarching anti-racism statement, which embeds anti-racism within the refreshed Values in Actions framework so that values-based actions guide everyday practice, culturally safe care, and workforce accountability.

You can view the new framework, the anti-racism statement and find resources to help managers lead values-based activities on [QHEPS](#). I encourage you all to visit the page and think about how living the values relates to your everyday work.

Remember to recognise those showing values in action

Many of you live our values to the highest of standards day in and day out. The Metro

North [Shout Out Portal](#) is a great way to recognise your colleagues not just for the big things, but also the small things that make such a difference to a positive work environment and successful patient care.

There were several outstanding shouts outs in the month of January across all areas, but I wanted to recognise one in particular. Well done to Karen Zillman, Acting Assistant Nursing Director, Clinical Governance Unit at Caboolture Hospital. You're clearly living the values and uplifting your team—contributing to a great workplace culture.



"Karen is a highly experienced manager who leads with compassion and demonstrates unwavering kindness and respect, even when working under significant pressure. Karen consistently makes time for her staff, offering support and guidance that cultivates a positive working environment."

National Employee Appreciation Day – call for video submissions

National Employee Appreciation Day is coming up, and it's the ideal opportunity to recognise the incredible people who make Metro North what it is.

This year I'm inviting staff to take part in a short video celebration. Please submit a 5-10 second video clip acknowledging and appreciating your team or a colleague who has made a difference to you.

Your message might be a quick thank you, a shout-out for going above and beyond, recognition of teamwork and support, or a moment you're proud of. Selected clips will be compiled into a short celebration video to share across the organisation on National Employee Appreciation Day.

[Please click here](#) to submit your video by Friday 27 February.

This is an opportunity to recognise the dedication, collaboration and care that happens across Metro North every day. I look forward to seeing your messages of appreciation and celebrating our staff.

Take care.
Nick.

Acting Executive Director, Clinical Services

Dr Jason Jenkins





Audience: All staff



Read time: 2 min



For: Information

qhRefer GO-LIVE!

Healthcare Excellence & Innovation (HEI) and Outpatient Strategies' qhRefer Project Team, in partnership with eHealth Queensland's Integrated Care Solutions Team (ICST), are excited to roll out **qhRefer** at Redcliffe Hospital, Caboolture Hospital, Caboolture Satellite Health Centre, Bribie Island Satellite Health Centre, Kilcoy Hospital, Woodford Correctional Facility, Surgical Treatment and Rehabilitation Services (STARS), The Prince Charles Hospital and Kallangur Satellite Health Centre (COH later in 2026).

Successfully piloted at RBWH in 2024, and with ongoing roll out across the state, qhRefer provides an electronic platform for the creation and submission of Queensland Health Specialist Outpatient referrals and post discharge appointment requests (PDAR). Additionally, qhRefer allows automated correspondence to GP's enhancing communication between GPs and specialists.

qhRefer provides:

- Improved patient safety and streamlined access to care
- Standardised referrals, aligning with Clinical Prioritisation Criteria (CPC)
- Improved legibility and traceability of internal and QH referrals, with timely GP communication
- Integrated digital management of referrals, from qhRefer to smart referrals
- Analytics capabilities providing QH referrals and PDAR activity data

Go-live Dates

Monday 23rd February 2026 - Redcliffe Hospital, Caboolture Hospital, Caboolture Satellite Health Centre, Bribie Island Satellite Health Centre, Kilcoy Hospital and Woodford Correctional Facility.

Monday 9th March 2026 - STARS, TPCH and Kallangur Satellite Health Centre.

The Metro North qhRefer project team will continue to deliver facilitated training sessions across all facilities during the go-live period. If you have not yet completed your training, an online module is available via [TMS](#) or contact MNqhRefer@health.qld.gov.au to coordinate training locally.

Over 1800 Metro North employees have been trained in qhRefer, with many new clinicians rotating in from other HHS already being familiar with the system. The qhRefer project team will be onsite floor-walking during the immediate go-live period and look forward to supporting users. For more information and resources please visit [qhRefer | Metro North Health](#).

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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