

Metro North Health

Message from the

Acting Executive Director The Prince Charles Hospital

Melanie Dubbelde



Summary:

- Executive Update
- International teaching award
- LVAD Coordinators Day
- National recognition for CCRG conference
- Welcome Dr Cassie Oxenford

Message feedback



Audience: All staff



Read Time: 5 Minutes



For: Information

Dear team,

I greatly appreciate your support while I'm acting in the Executive Director role.

You will have seen media reporting about TPCH this week which may be distressing to staff, patients and our broader community. It's important when issues like these arise that we take appropriate action to resolve them but also remember to be kind to each other and look after yourselves.

If you need someone to talk to, please reach out to a [TPCH Peer Responder](#) or directly to one of [staff support](#) services.

Have Your Say survey update

By now, all teams should have received their Have Your Say survey results. Team leaders and managers should be meeting with their teams to discuss and understand the results together.

All teams and leaders, whether you received your own Have Your Say report or not, are expected to discuss what's working well in your team, as well as areas for improvement.

Then, as a group, commit to two meaningful team goals and one personal leadership goal that address what you discussed as a team.

Leaders need to input the goals into the [Have Your Say Goal Setting Form](#) as soon as



possible.

This will not only help improve transparency, collaboration and culture in your team, but the goals will also inform our TPCH Have Your Say action plan and help us report on what action is taken in response to Have Your Say.

There are some great [resources](#) available on QHEPS to assist managers with team discussions and goal setting.

Executive Update

Sharyn Trappett will continue to act in the Director Corporate Services role, following the resignation of Bretine Curtis. We will review this role and the leadership team structure before moving to recruitment.

Geoff Grima will temporarily backfill the Executive Director role at STARS from 24 November 2025 to 11 January 2026, followed by leave, returning to TPCH on 2 February 2026.

During this time, the following staff will backfill the TPCH Director of Operations EPIC role:

- Gillian Nasato: 24 November 2025 to 21 December 2025
- Kevin Clark: 22 December 2025 to 11 January 2026
- Kristy Rogan: 12 January 2026 to 1 February 2026.

International teaching award

Congratulations to TPCH Echocardiology Clinical Director Professor Greg Scalia AM who recently won a prestigious international teaching award.

Prof Scalia was presented with the Richard Popp Teaching Award from the American Society of Echocardiography at its annual scientific meeting in Nashville, Tennessee last month.

He is the first person outside the USA to win this prestigious award in the past 50 years!

The award recognises an outstanding teacher nominated by their students and peers. It focuses attention on the important role teaching and mentorship has in influencing and improving the echocardiographers of the future.



LVAD Coordinators Day

Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) Coordinators Day acknowledges the critical role LVAD Coordinators play in delivering comprehensive care for a complex patient cohort and is an opportunity for both patients and the multidisciplinary team to say thanks for all LVAD Coordinators.

An LVAD is a surgically implanted, durable mechanical pump that supports the heart's pumping function in patients with severe heart failure. It can improve heart failure symptoms, improve long-term survival and give heart failure patients a better quality of life, for many whilst on the journey toward heart transplant.

The Prince Charles Hospital has the only LVAD program in Queensland, covering northern New South Wales to Far North Queensland.

LVAD Coordinators are specialised nurses who work closely with the multidisciplinary team to manage the care of patients with an LVAD for the duration of their patient journey.

Stop Racism. It starts with me vidcast

Join Acting Metro North Chief People and Culture Officer Brett Bourke and Executive Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Sherry Holzapfel for the *Stop Racism. It Starts with Me* vidcast.

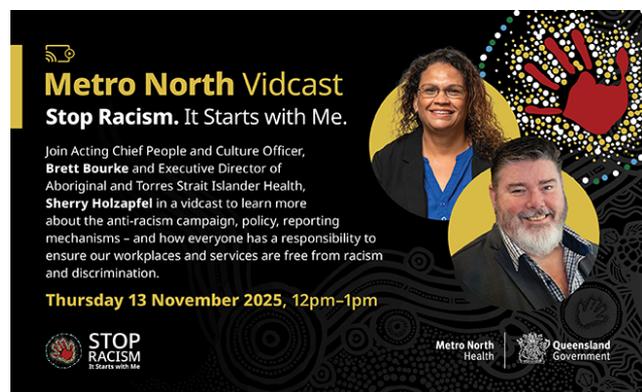
This follows on from the anti-racism campaign launched earlier this year which achieved recognition not only within Metro North but across the state.

We all have a responsibility to create spaces for our community, patients and staff that are free from racism and discrimination.

Date: Thursday 13 November

When: 12pm to 1pm

[Join the vidcast here.](#)



Trans Awareness Week: 13 - 19 November

Trans Awareness Week is observed annually from 13 to 19 November, leading up to Trans Day of Remembrance on 20 November.

This week is dedicated to raising awareness of transgender, gender diverse, and non-binary people, the challenges faced by these communities, and the ways allies can support meaningful change.

It's an ideal time to educate ourselves and others about gender diversity and the importance of being a visible and active trans ally. By listening, learning, and advocating, we can help create a more inclusive, equitable, and respectful health system and society.

If you would like to join the Pride in Metro North group, [send an email](#).

If you're interested in participating in events or information sharing at TPCH, or would like a pronoun pin, email [Michelle Wierenga](#).

National award for CCRG conference

Congratulations to the Critical Care Research Group (CCRG) on their latest award.

The CCRG was recognised for the Best Congress or Conference (less than 500 delegates) at the Australian Event Awards recently, for their biennial research summit - the *Critical Care Research International: Knowledge, Evidence and beyond* (CRIKEY).

The judges, led by Peter Rix AM, noted CRIKEY's unique, personal touches set it apart from other conferences. The innovative ways that stakeholders and junior researchers are included in the program was also praised.



CRIKEY was also shortlisted for overall Australian Event of the Year.

Above: CCRG Senior Communications Officer Lauren Kelly accepts the Australian Event Award trophy.



Staff Profile - Dr Cassie Oxenford

Dr Cassie Oxenford recently joined TPCH in General Medicine Neurology.

Dr Oxenford is a neurologist with a further subspecialty fellowship in neuromuscular neurology. She also has a fellowship in general internal medicine.

Dr. Oxenford recently returned to Australia after completing a clinical neuromuscular neurology fellowship at Vancouver General Hospital, a tertiary referral centre in the largest city in Canada's West Coast province of British Columbia.

She has previously completed fellowships in neurology and general medicine in Queensland and has worked as a neurologist and general medicine physician in public hospitals throughout Queensland and as a sub-principal investigator recruiting patients to international trials for rare neuromuscular conditions.

By completing an international neuromuscular fellowship in a world class centre, she aims to utilise the skillsets she has gained overseas to further education and research opportunities for neurology trainees in Queensland and ultimately advance the care for patients with these conditions in Queensland and Australia.

Passing of Father Huong

I was saddened to hear of the recent passing of Father Van Huong Nguyen, who was a Catholic Chaplain with TPCH and St Vincent's Private Hospital, Northside for many years.



Father Huong was born in Vietnam and spent three years in Sydney before moving to Brisbane in 1993. He was ordained in late 1995 and served as Assistant Priest at several parishes across South East Queensland until his retirement in 2023.

Father Huong died in late October after a short illness. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Remembrance Day service

TPCH will host a Remembrance Day Service next Tuesday morning in the Multi Faith Centre, led by Chaplain Judy Burt.

It will run from 10.45am to 11.05am and incorporate the minute silence at 11am. All are welcome.



TPCH will broadcast a Remembrance Day service to all other areas of the hospital at 11am.

Kind regards,

Mel Dubbelde

Acting Executive Director
The Prince Charles Hospital



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 we 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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