People and Culture

Metro North Health
CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT

People and Culture Programs

Manager guide to putting values into action

Metro North
Health

Queensland
Government

Contents

Introduction

Metro North Health upholds five core values that shape our culture, influence decision-making, and guide how we work together at every level. Research consistently shows that when values are actively embedded in everyday practice, rather than remaining aspirational statements, they strengthen trust, engagement, and performance (Mason, 2021; Paliwal et al., 2025).

This guide is designed to support managers to embed Metro North Health's values into everyday work. Rather than prescribing behaviours, it focuses on practical actions, conversations, and ways of working that help teams understand what our values look like in practice. Leadership consistency and role modelling play a critical role in this process, as misalignment between stated values and lived experience can erode trust and performance (van der Walt & Wiese, 2025).

Metro North Values in Action (ViA)

At the heart of Metro North Health are five shared values that represent who we are as an organisation and how we strive to work together.

The Values in Action (ViA) Framework creates a shared understanding of what these values mean and how they are experienced in everyday work. It supports consistency across Metro North Health while allowing teams and services to bring the values to life in ways that are meaningful to their local context.

Research highlights that values are most effective when teams have opportunities to discuss, interpret, and apply them collectively, rather than relying on fixed prescriptions (Le Bail et al., 2022). ViA therefore focuses on **what matters** and **what values look like in practice**, while the skills and capabilities that support these values will be articulated through the Capability Framework.

ViA Framework:

For more information on the Metro North ViA Framework, please visit QHEPS.

Why values matter

- **Practical impact:** Values are most powerful when they are reflected in everyday practice and embedded across the employee lifecycle, from recruitment and onboarding to development, performance, recognition, and exit (Yuvashree & Christina, 2025).

- **Leadership role:** Leadership consistency and visible role modelling are critical enablers of a positive, values-led culture; misalignment between espoused values and lived experience erodes trust and performance (van der Walt & Wiese, 2025).

- **Collaborative value work:** Teams often experience differences in how values are understood. Addressing these differences openly through structured dialogue strengthens shared ownership and psychological safety (Le Bail et al., 2022).

ViA implementation at a glance

Values in action becomes meaningful when leaders translate the ViA Framework into consistent, practical activities that shape how their teams work every day.

The steps below outline a simple, repeatable cycle for embedding values across your team. This cycle is not linear or one-off. Teams may move between steps at different times depending on priorities, change, or challenges.

Each step is supported by tools and resources available through the ViA Framework and the People and Culture Programs team.

Table 1: Embedding values – A step-by-step cycle

Step	Focus	What managers do	What this looks like in practice	Common pitfalls	Tips for success	Supporting tools & resources
1	Build shared understanding of values.	Introduce the five Metro North Health values & explore what they mean in practice for your team.	Teams talk openly about how values show up in day-to-day work, decisions, & interactions. Shared understanding is built through discussion & reflection, not prescription.	Treating values as obvious or self-explanatory.	Ask open questions like "What does this look like on a busy day?"	1. ViA Framework 2. Meeting agenda prompts for leaders 3. Values spotlight meeting activity.
2	Co-design how values show up locally.	Facilitate a Team Charter conversation to agree how values are lived in your team's context.	Teams define shared expectations & ways of working that reflect the values & support inclusion, accountability, & psychological safety.	Copying another team's approach without adapting it.	Let the team define what matters in their context.	1. Team Values Charter template 2. Team Values Charter facilitation guide and presentation 3. Support from Culture, Engagement, & Wellbeing.
3	Embed values into everyday work.	Integrate values into routine processes such as recruitment, onboarding, meetings, PDP conversations, & decision-making.	Values are referenced naturally in interviews, meeting discussions, goal setting, & everyday decisions, making them visible & relevant.	Only talking about values during workshops or inductions.	Use small, regular touchpoints rather than big launches.	1. Values-based recruitment framework & interview questions 2. PDP guide & question bank. 3. Decision-making checklist
4	Lead by example.	Consistently role model values through everyday decisions, priorities, & communication.	Leaders demonstrate values in action, acknowledge value tensions, & invite feedback to build trust & clarity.	Expecting values to "stick" without leadership visibility.	Be explicit about why decisions align with values.	1. Leadership in Action principles 2. ViA Leadership Practices 3. Strategic planning reflection questions 4. Decision-making checklist
5	Reinforce & recognise.	Notice, acknowledge, & celebrate values in action across the team.	Leaders & teams share stories of values lived in practice & recognise contributions that strengthen culture & performance.	Only recognising large or formal achievements.	Notice everyday actions that reflect the values.	1. ViA Leadership Practices 2. Staff Shout Out Portal 3. Storytelling capture template (Appendix E of the *ViA Team Charter Facilitation Guide*) 4. Recognition conversation tips
6	Reflect & refresh	Review how values have been experienced over the year & identify focus areas for the year ahead.	Teams reflect on which values were most visible, where challenges arose, & what to strengthen next, supporting continuous improvement.	Treating reflection as a compliance task.	Keep it light, honest, and team-owned.	1. Team pulse check questions 2. Annual Team Charter Reflection Template (Appendix F of the *ViA Team Charter Facilitation Guide*)

Key messages to share with your team

Clear communication about our organisational values ensures that every team member understands their role in fostering a values-driven culture. Leaders should actively share and discuss these key messages to reinforce the importance of living our values in day-to-day work:

- Metro North Health values define the culture we aspire to and support our strategic goals.

- Every staff member has a role in embodying values through daily interactions and decision-making.

- The ViA Framework supports a shared understanding of what our values look like in everyday practice (Mason, 2021).

- When values are actively demonstrated, they foster a positive, inclusive, and high-performing workplace (Paliwal et al., 2025; van der Walt & Wiese, 2025).

Practical ways to embed values in your team

Values must be integrated into everyday workplace interactions to truly shape culture. Leaders can take proactive steps to ensure that values are consistently recognised, discussed, and reinforced in team settings.

Making values visible and actionable

Bringing values to life within your team ensures they are more than just words—they become guiding principles for daily interactions and decision-making. By embedding values into everyday practices, leaders can cultivate a workplace culture that is aligned, engaged, and purpose driven.

- **Facilitate ongoing conversations:** Regularly discuss organisational values and how they apply to your team's work and decision-making (Mason, 2021).

- **Encourage exploration:** Use the ViA Framework and team exercises to deepen understanding.

- **Reinforce with visuals:** Display values posters in common areas to create daily reminders of their importance.

- **Integrate into meetings:** Use a "values spotlight" to recognise values in action and discuss challenges (Mason, 2021).

Note: A list of values-driven activities for large and small teams as well as self-reflection activities are available on the ViA Framework page.

Encouraging values-based engagement

Fostering a values-driven culture requires active participation and recognition. Engaging your team in meaningful discussions and appreciation of values in action helps reinforce values in action and strengthens team cohesion.

- **Create a ViA Team Charter:** For practical steps to co-design shared expectations and ways of working aligned to the values, refer to the Team Values Charter Activity.

- **Recognise values in action:** Celebrate peers who exemplify values via the Staff shout out portal.

- **Story capture:** Collect and share stories of values-in-action to build collective pride and learning.

Embedding values into organisational processes

Embedding values into workplace processes strengthens a team's commitment to cultural alignment. Leaders can ensure values are considered in key organisational activities, including hiring, training, and performance management.

- **Recruitment and hiring:** Use the [values-based recruitment framework](#) to select candidates who align with your team's culture and organisational values. Incorporate values-based questions in interviews to explore how candidates have applied values in practice in previous roles and their commitment to upholding the organisational values (van der Walt & Wiese, 2025).

- **Onboarding and induction:** Introduce new team members to the Metro North Health values as a foundational part of the [onboarding and induction](#). Share real workplace examples to demonstrate how these values are lived out in practice (Mason, 2021).

- **Performance Development Planning (PDP):** Ensure individual and team goals are clearly aligned with Metro North Health values. This approach not only drives high performance but also encourages ongoing personal and professional growth (Yuvashree & Christina, 2025).

- **Recognition and awards:** Celebrate individuals and teams who embody Metro North health's values through formal and informal recognition. Nominate colleagues and teams for the [Metro North Health Staff Excellence Awards](#) to recognise outstanding contributions. You can also express appreciation through the [Staff Shout Out Portal](#), which is a great way to thank and highlight peers and teams who positively influence the workplace, collaborate in new and innovative ways, or consistently go above and beyond (Mason, 2021).

Note: For more information on values-based recruitment, register for Recruitment information sessions on TMS by searching *'Recruitment'* in TMS.

Leading by example

As a leader, your actions set the standard for a values-driven workplace. By consistently demonstrating and reinforcing organisational values, you create an environment where employees feel supported, engaged, and motivated to uphold these principles in their own work.

- **Model the values daily:** Lead by example by consistently aligning your actions and decisions with Metro North Health's values (van der Walt & Wiese, 2025).

- **Embed values in communication:** Reinforce organisational values in meetings, emails, and formal messaging to keep them at the forefront of workplace culture.

- **Coach and guide through a values lens:** Provide meaningful feedback and support that reflects and strengthens the organisation's values (Yuvashree & Christina, 2025).

- **Foster open dialogue:** Invite challenge and surface dilemmas safely, name value tensions and agree on operating norms (Le Bail et al., 2022).

ViA leadership practices

To make values practical, leaders need resources they can apply directly in their daily work. This section provides a concise set of prompts and examples that leaders can adapt to embed values into leadership meetings, decision-making, feedback, and strategic planning. These are not exhaustive resources, but practical conversation starters and reflection tools. By using them consistently, they help reinforce a culture where values are lived rather than simply stated.

Meeting agenda prompts for leaders

Incorporating values into meeting structures keeps them visible and relevant:

- **Opening check-in:** *"Which of our values has been most visible in our team this month?"*

- **Decision reflection:** *"How does this agenda item align with our ViA values?"*

- **Closing reflection:** *"What is one way we will live our values before the next meeting?"*

These prompts normalise everyday reflection on behaviour, culture, and alignment.

Decision-making checklist

Before finalising key decisions, leaders can reflect:

- *Does this decision demonstrate **Respect** for staff, patients, or stakeholders?*
- *Are we acting with **Integrity** and transparency?*
- *Does this choice enable **High Performance** and sustainable results?*
- *Have we shown **Compassion** for those impacted?*
- *Have we engaged in **Teamwork** by considering diverse perspectives?*

This helps ensure decisions are values-aligned, ethical and inclusive.

Strategic planning reflection questions

When developing strategies or business plans, consider:

- *How are ViA values woven into our priorities and measures?*
- *What risks to living our values exist in this plan, and how can we mitigate them?*
- *How will staff see and feel the values in action through this strategy?*

These questions help leaders embed values in long-term planning and organisational alignment.

Courageous conversations and values-aligned feedback

Providing clear, constructive and compassionate feedback is critical to maintaining trust, safety and accountability. Leaders can use the below courageous conversation framework to support effective discussions when actions or decisions are misaligned with agreed values and expectations.

When to use:

- Addressing unhelpful or misaligned behaviour
- Resetting expectations after breaches
- Navigating value tensions
- Offering early, supportive intervention
- Reinforcing positive behaviours through developmental feedback

Conversation framework:

1. **Prepare through the values lens**
   - Clarify which value is impacted and what action or decision is of concern
   - Identify the outcome you want from the conversation

2. **Start with clarity and care**
   - Focus on actions and impact, not personal traits
   - Name your positive intent

3. **Describe what you observed**
   - **S**ituation – **A**ction – **I**mpact (SAI)
   - Link to the relevant value

4. **Explore their perspective**

- Ask curious, open questions
- Listen actively

5. **Agree on the way forward**

- Clarify 1–2 practical next steps aligned to values and expectations
- Offer support

6. **Close the conversation**

- Reinforce progress
- Agree on a follow-up check-in

This approach helps leaders uphold the Team Values Charter in a respectful, supportive, and consistent way.

Sample leadership meeting agenda (with ViA integration)

- **Welcome and acknowledgement of Country**
- **Quick values check-in** (5 min): Share a recent values story
- **Operational updates:** Highlight values alignment where relevant
- **Staff recognition:** Celebrate values lived in practice
- **Close:** Confirm one values-based action to carry forward

By embedding values directly into leadership routines, decisions, and plans, leaders demonstrate consistency and authenticity. Over time, these practices help normalise values as the foundation for "how we do things" across Metro North Health.

Creating a team values charter

A values-driven culture begins with a shared understanding of expectations and ways of working within a team. A team charter serves as a collaborative agreement that outlines shared values, expectations, and agreed ways of working. Collaboratively defining what each value looks, feels and sounds like within your team helps to establish shared expectations and accountability. Where value tensions arise, it is recommended to use structured facilitation to negotiate shared meaning (Le Bail et al., 2022).

This exercise is not only a valuable team-building activity but also a strategic tool for ensuring clarity in roles, responsibilities, and workplace interactions. By co-developing a team charter, employees gain a sense of ownership over workplace culture, fostering psychological safety, teamwork, and accountability. A well-defined charter helps:

- Align team practices with MNH's overarching values.
- Clarify expectations and promote a constructive team culture.
- Encourage continuous reflection on positive workplace practices.
- Provide a reference point for addressing challenges and reinforcing strengths.

To complete your team's values charter, templates and detailed instructions can be found on the ViA Framework page.

For further support in building your team's charter, reach out to the Culture, Engagement and Wellbeing team at mnvalues@health.qld.gov.au.

Evaluation and measurement

To keep values alive, teams should revisit their Team Values Charter annually. An annual charter reflection template can be found in the Team Charter Facilitation Guide and has been developed to support teams to review their Team Values Charter in a structured, meaningful way. As part of the annual reflection, teams consider:

- Which values were most visible in our everyday work

- Where value-based tensions or gaps emerged (Mason, 2021).

- Two to three improvements or commitments for the next 12 months.

Pulse check

To complement the annual review, leaders are encouraged to use short, quarterly pulse checks to understand how team members are experiencing values, behaviours, and culture throughout the year. Pulse checks can be completed anonymously using Microsoft Forms, Slide or MS Teams polls. Teams may choose to use the following questions:

1. I feel our team consistently lives our agreed values in everyday work.

2. We address issues respectfully when actions or decisions are misaligned with our values.

3. I see leaders role modelling our values and agreed ways of working.

4. I feel our team consistently demonstrates our agreed behaviours.

5. I feel proud of how our team lives our values.

Optional open-ended prompts may also be used to deepen insights:

- *"One value we lived really well this month was…"*

- *"One area where we could strengthen how we live our values is…"*

- *"A values moment worth celebrating is…"*

This light-touch, team-owned approach ensures the values remain meaningful and relevant, without adding unnecessary administrative burden. Leaders may also integrate pulse survey feedback or stories from the Staff Shout out Portal to support reflection (Bogale & Debela, 2024; Paliwal et al., 2025).

Conclusion

A strong values-based culture is the foundation of high-performing teams and quality healthcare outcomes. As a manager, you play a crucial role in reinforcing Metro North Health's values and guiding your team toward a culture of respect, integrity, compassion, teamwork, and high performance. By embedding these principles into everyday interactions and decision-making, you help create a workplace where employees feel valued, motivated, and aligned with our vision (Paliwal et al., 2025; van der Walt & Wiese, 2025).

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