

# Executive Message

## Metro North Health



### Summary:

- STARS turns 5
- Organisational culture and decision making
- Planning for our future
- Executive appointment - CAHP
- Plan to move to new Learning System - SAP SuccessFactors
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service update
- Metro North Innovation Showcase - call for abstracts.

Message feedback

## Chief Executive Nick Steele



**Audience:** All staff



**Read time:** 5+ min



**For:** Action

Hi Everyone,

This week, I've continued to get out and about, meeting with front line staff and leaders across the health service to discuss the great work we're doing, and ongoing priorities and challenges.

On Wednesday, I had the pleasure of attending STARS birthday celebrations, to recognise five wonderful years of operation. STARS opened in February 2021 in the middle of a global pandemic and became an integral part of Queensland's response to COVID-19 with the establishment of a vaccination clinic. Five years on, STARS continues to play a vital role in improving access to care, reducing waitlists for surgical, procedural and sub-acute patients and working towards delivering the best specialist rehabilitation services in the southern hemisphere. I would like to thank all the staff at STARS for their dedication in providing quality healthcare for



our patients, and in particular, the improvements which I have seen in this financial year. You should all be very proud of what you have all delivered.



Early in the week, I travelled to TPCH and Caboolture Hospital where I met with the Older Persons Emergency Network (OPEN). OPEN is an emergency department substitution service offering emergency care for older people in their own home. It aims to provide an alternative pathway for older persons to access acute care in the community. As demands on our services grow, especially with our older, long-stay patients, alternative care pathways like OPEN become increasingly important in allowing us to continue providing safe, high quality and timely care to this vulnerable patient cohort.

Also this week, the Metro North Virtual Ward formally transferred to Community and Oral Health (COH) within the Home and Hospital Service Line. This transition will create tremendous opportunity for growth in providing safe, high-quality care to our patients at home, supporting Metro North's strengthened focus on out-of-hospital care options.

As I've emphasised previously, with increasing pressures on our service, there is a significant impetus to improve how we work together. At a broad level, this is about streamlining how we work and collaborate across our network of facilities to ensure we are using our resources in the best possible way to deliver high-value care to our patients and community.

Our front line staff and leaders are already innovating every day to provide the best care possible, but as demands increase, improving how we work together becomes vital. This includes making timely, practical decisions at the level closest to where the work takes place and reduce the numerous levels of bureaucracy. As I've visited and talked with staff across the health service during the past few months, I've heard many examples of how relatively simple operational improvements or changes, have stalled because no one felt confident they had the authority to act, or were concerned about being second-guessed if something went wrong. The result is workarounds, delay and frustration for staff and for patients.

Through our organisational culture work, a consistent theme has emerged - decision rights and escalation pathways are not always clear, and people are sometimes unsure whether they will be supported if they act in good faith within their delegation and area of authority. We need to change that. If a decision is within your delegations and it improves patient care, safety or efficiency, please make it. If you are unsure, seek clarity from your line manager but don't default to inaction. Leaders at every level have a responsibility to create an environment where staff can act within their full scope, and know they will be supported when they do so thoughtfully and in the best interests of achieving positive outcomes.

Improving decision clarity and reducing unnecessary escalation is a key focus of our organisational culture work. It is about removing friction so good ideas and sensible solutions don't stall in the system. You can read more about our organisational culture work [here](#).

## Planning for our future

As the number of patients we care for each year grows, our ability to plan, look ahead and anticipate future challenges and opportunities becomes increasingly important. While we must respond to the immediate, short-term horizon needs, we also need to consider capabilities that will make a difference over the next 15 years. Understanding future growth challenges enables us to devise an enduring healthcare system — one that is sustainable, innovative, and centres on the needs of our community. There is no question that as a health service, we need to innovate to meet these future challenges.

With this direction in mind, I am pleased to advise that from 1 March 2026, Jodi Hallas, Executive Director Strategy and Planning will report directly to the Chief Executive role. This change in governance supports Metro North's significant focus on advancing strategy and planning activities that balances the issues of today with the bold future we want to create. It will also allow our Chief Operating Officer to direct more attention to delivering service and operational priorities across the organisation.

One of the immediate priorities for the Strategy and Planning team will be to build on work already undertaken by Metro North including the Health Services Plan, recently prepared by EY and Destraavis. The team will work with staff across our Hospital and Health Service to shape *Future Metro North: Reimagining Healthcare 2026-2041*. This future-focussed strategy will deliver on our strategic directions and provide a roadmap of our shared goals for the future. It will be highly ambitious and describe a Metro North Health that is a world leader in healthcare, and one that we are all proud to work towards by 2041. Importantly, *Future Metro North: Reimagining Healthcare 2026-2041* will be informed and designed by you.

In the coming weeks, Metro North will host a series of Staff Expos at each facility and directorate where staff will have the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions about *Future Metro North: Reimagining Healthcare 2026-2041*. The Strategy and Planning team will have a dedicated stand at each Staff Expo where staff can view, discuss and provide feedback about the roadmap. Staff Expos will kick off next Wednesday 4 March at TPCH, 11am – 2pm. Details of other staff expos can be viewed [here](#).

Next **Tuesday 3 March**, 10am – 11am, staff are also invited to attend a Teams Meeting where I will discuss Future Metro North and how staff can participate in the consultation phase. I look forward to many of you joining me for this important conversation.

[Join Teams Meeting](#)

## Executive appointment

I am pleased to announce the Michelle Stute has been appointed to the position of Metro North Chief Allied Health Practitioner (CAHP). Michelle brings extensive executive leadership experience to this role, having been Director Allied Health STARS for over two years, and acting as CAHP several times during the last few years. For over eight years, she worked in the office of the CAHP, delivering strategic initiatives for the Metro North allied health workforce and was previously the Senior Director Clinical Operations, Community and Oral Health (COH). Her well-honed clinical leadership skills have been further enhanced by over 15 years' experience designing, implementing and evaluating allied health workforce and model of care reforms involving the broad range of allied health professions across Metro North and Queensland.



On behalf of the Senior Executive Team, I warmly welcome Michelle to the CAHP role. We look forward to continuing to benefit from Michelle's excellent skills in supporting us to further improve allied health services across Metro North. I also extend my sincere thanks to Perry Judd for his leadership and support while acting in the CAHP role for the last nine months.

### Leading health services innovation

Congratulations to the Metro North Office of Research who coordinated a successful health innovation conference last week. The conference - *Innovation: The Health Leadership Revolution*, organised in partnership with Griffith University and the Australasian College of Health Service Management (ACHSM) as part of the Metro North Health Leading Health Services Innovation Program, explored the challenges and opportunities shaping healthcare delivery, innovation and research translation.

The conference included powerful keynote addresses from the Hon Tim Nicholls, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Dr David Rosengren, Director-General Queensland Health, regarding key priorities for healthcare leaders in clinical and non-clinical areas. Attendees also had the opportunity to engage with interactive panels that showcased innovations in artificial intelligence, data and virtual care –demonstrating strong evidence from health services research and health economic analysis of improved patient outcomes. Thank you to those staff across Metro North who attended this highly thought-provoking educational event. Events like this provide important insights into the incredible future potential opportunities of healthcare ahead of us.

### Shout out

This week, I'd like to give a special shout out to the Metro North Occupational Violence (OV) Team who will be moving to Charlotte Street under the Department of Health from Monday 2 March after recently undergoing a business case for change. The team have been with Metro North for almost 10 years, having made a significant contribution to supporting the health service with our OV response.



The other shout out goes to Luke Mayze, Metro North Videographer who was recently announced as a finalist in the popular global film festival Tropfest for his heartwarming short film, Tilly. You are invited to [watch Luke's film](#) and show your support by voting [here](#) for most popular film.

Take care.  
Nick.

Acting Chief People and Culture Officer

**Lorna Morton**



**Audience:** All staff



**Read time:** 1 min



**For:** Information

### Plan to move to new Learning System - SAP SuccessFactors

The Director-General, Queensland Health has made the decision for the Department of Health and all Hospital and Health Services across the state to move to a single learning system.

The new statewide learning system will use SAP SuccessFactors Learning and will replace our current Talent Management System (TMS).

#### The benefits of this change

A single learning solution will allow staff to move across the system with their training records following them. It will provide a consistent and easy to use learning experience, strengthen compliance and governance, and reduce duplicated systems and costs.

#### What this means for you

Due to the size and complexity of the system change, the transition to SAP SuccessFactors

will be delivered through a staged approach. It has been proposed that the Department of Health and Metro North Health transition first, at the end of the 2026 calendar year. However, there are still various details and challenges for the timeframe being worked out, and collaborative discovery workshops with key leads from each HHS and the Department have begun.

I will keep you updated as things progress. The leadership team and I understand this work involves important considerations, including our people and priorities.

Regards,  
Lorna

Executive Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

**Adj. Prof. Sherry Holzapfel**



**Audience:** All staff



**Read time:** 3 min



**For:** Information

Dear colleagues,

Thank you to everyone who took part in the New Year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Pulse Survey led by our Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) team. Your honest reflections provide invaluable insight into the experiences of our workforce and help guide where our efforts can create the greatest impact.

The results highlight strong relational team cultures grounded in open communication, supportive peer networks and meaningful connection to culture, Country and community. At the same time, staff shared important concerns, including burnout, experiences of racism and systemic barriers, and the need for more consistent and supportive/responsive leadership. These insights reinforce both the strengths within our workforce and the ongoing work required to build culturally safe, respectful and supportive workplaces for all staff.

The SEWB team will continue their scheduled site visits across Metro North Health to yarn directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. These visits offer a confidential, culturally grounded and safe space to have a one-on-one yarn and access support from our SEWB Officers. If you would like to connect with the team, I encourage you to reach out at [ATSILT\\_Wellness\\_Referrals@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:ATSILT_Wellness_Referrals@health.qld.gov.au).

To further support opportunities for open dialogue, I will be visiting RBWH on 5 March 2026 from 9.00am to 10.30am as part of my annual *Yarns with Sherry* sessions. These sessions allow me to connect directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and services across our organisation. I want to hear how you're going, understand your experiences and continue building strong, genuine connections across our workforce. No bookings are required; please come along during the session time and have a yarn.

Connection and collaboration also remain central to supporting our workforce. On 4

March, we will host the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander *Better Together Staff Gathering* for 2026 at the Kallangur Community Hall. This gathering will be an opportunity to strengthen relationships, share learnings and reaffirm our shared purpose. I encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to attend wherever possible.

Recognition continues to be a key theme in your feedback. Every day, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and services contribute exceptional leadership, cultural knowledge and care to improve health outcomes. We remain committed to celebrating this work—through our *Better Together Yarns* eBulletin, the *Better Together – Our Health, Our Way* social media channels and our annual Staff Gatherings. If you know someone demonstrating cultural leadership or excellence, please consider nominating them via [A\\_TSILTCommsMNH@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:A_TSILTCommsMNH@health.qld.gov.au).

Strengthening cultural safety also means continuing to address and eliminate racism within our systems and workplaces.

Last week, Metro North Health held the first *Beyond Diversity* workshop for 2026—a key component of our anti-racism agenda. The program supports staff to deepen their understanding of how race influences decision-making, interactions and the care we deliver. It provides practical tools to recognise the impact of race at personal, professional and organisational levels, helping foster more culturally safe and accountable practice.

Additional *Beyond Diversity* sessions will be delivered throughout 2026, and I encourage all leaders and staff to prioritise participation as part of our shared responsibility to deliver safe, equitable and high-quality care. Upcoming sessions can be found by searching “Beyond Diversity Workshop” on TMS.

Thank you for your continued commitment to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and for everything you contribute to Metro North Health.

Kind regards,  
Sherry

Acting Executive Director, Clinical Services

**Dr Jason Jenkins**



**Audience:** All staff



**Read time:** 1 min



**For:** Information

### **Innovation Showcase – Call for Abstracts – EOI Open!**

The **2026 Metro North Innovation Showcase**, presented by Healthcare Excellence & Innovation and the HELIX Hub will be held on **Friday, 12 June** at the RBWH Education Centre, Herston.

We're calling for bold, transformative projects that reimagine how we deliver healthcare

through innovation, implementation, and collaboration. If your work is shaping the healthcare of tomorrow, now is your time to share with the MN community.

Step into the world of possibilities with us at the 2026 Metro North Innovation Showcase as we unite under the theme *Designing Tomorrow, Together*.

**Submit your abstract for an Oral Presentation, Lightning Presentation or Poster.**

Abstract Submissions will **close on Thursday 19 March**.

- [Abstract Submission Guidelines are available here](#)
- [EOI Form for submission is available here](#)

I encourage teams to put forward the innovative work shaping our future—whether in smarter models of care, new ways of working or in digital health. This is a great opportunity to share your impact and inspire our network.

If you are not a member of the HELIX Hub Community or for more information email: [HELIXHub@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:HELIXHub@health.qld.gov.au)

Regards,  
Jason

**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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