

Executive Message

Metro North Health



Summary:

- Staff flu vaccination clinics
- Gastroenterology workshop
- Celebrating local Lung Legends
- SMART Metro North update
- Values in Action

Message feedback

Chief Executive Nick Steele



Audience: All staff



Read time: 4 min



For: Information

Hi Everyone,

The weather is starting to get cooler and the first sniffles of the season are on the way.

Last year 300 people died from influenza in Queensland. Protecting yourself from the flu also protects your colleagues, patients and family. Vaccination and good hand and respiratory hygiene are your best defences in flu season.

Staff flu vaccination clinics have commenced at TPC and the Oral Health Centre at Herston. Clinics at Redcliffe Hospital, RBWH and STARS commence Monday, and Green Square next Wednesday. Details of clinics are [available on the extranet](#). Community and Oral Health and Caboolture Hospital clinics will be added soon.

Staff can access flu vaccination at any staff clinic. If you choose to get vaccinated privately, I encourage you to let us know through the form on the extranet. This helps us with workforce planning over winter.

You can also find out about free community vaccination, including the new nasal spray for children aged 2-5, on the [Queensland Health website](#).



We are also looking at whether we can offer opportunistic COVID-19 vaccination at some flu clinics for staff who choose to get them. We'll let everyone know if this becomes available.

Gastroenterology workshop



On Monday I participated in a workshop hosted by the Surgery Stream and Strategy and Planning to look at how we can improve access to gastroenterology services. We know that there's an increase in gastrointestinal disease and delays in access to screening is additional time that people are concerned about possibly having bowel cancer.



The workshop was attended by clinicians, executive, service line leaders and gastroenterology subject matter experts from across Metro North.

Some of the issues and barriers impacting timely gastroenterology services identified at the workshop included the lack of clarity around operational governance, workforce challenges, inequitable referral pathways, and the need to optimise the use of existing built infrastructure and resources whilst planning ahead for significant growth in demand and scoping required to support the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.

The workshop was very productive participants codesigned an implementation 'roadmap' that will see nearly 50 new service and clinical care improvements undertaken over the next 3 years and another 24 continued as planned.

Participants also contributed to planning for *Future Metro North: reimagining healthcare 2026-2041*, identifying a range of real-world and aspirational opportunities to ensure we deliver world class care and reach our 2041 goals.

As part of the workshop we discussed ways to improve patient flow and communication, such as Digital Metro North's *Symphony* project, which I'll talk more about next week.

The event demonstrated the ability of Metro North clinicians to respond to contemporary service challenges with agility and creativity, including working through an unplanned fire alarm during the afternoon's session that saw brainstorming take place on the lawn!



Celebrating local Lung Legends

Congratulations to RBWH's Professor Catherine Jones and Associate Professor David Fielding who this week were named Lung Foundation Australia Lung Legends.

Assoc Prof Fielding is a thoracic physician in the Dept of Thoracic Medicine at RBWH, with a focus on lung cancer, screening and genomic testing. His clinical interests include robotic bronchoscopy, endobronchial ultrasound, and interventional procedures. On top of his clinical work, David is a clinical researcher, collaborating with researchers at QIMR Berghofer, Griffith University, and UQCCR (now the Frazer Institute), with a current focus on developing non-invasive biomarkers of lung nodules.



Prof Jones is a consultant radiologist at RBWH in thoracic imaging, with a strong interest in occupational and dust lung disease imaging, and Professor of Clinical Imaging Science at University of Sydney. Catherine co-designed the national Australian lung cancer screening program which commenced last year and for the past 7 years has been working on the development and deployment of AI tools for radiologists.



Photos supplied by Lung Foundation Australia.

SMART Metro North update

Thank you to everyone who has submitted a challenge or suggestion through SMART Metro North. Everyone who has submitted so far has received an email with an update of where your submission has been sent for consideration.

Many of the suggestions require longer term solutions, which we'll consider as we develop our future workforce, digital, and clinical plans.

It was interesting to see many challenges related to our current siloed way of working. Some of these may be addressed as we move towards working as one Metro North, such as consistent models of care across all hospitals, improving outpatient access, and streamlining processes.

Quite a few submissions will be considered as part of the outpatient redesign project currently underway with Health Excellence and Innovation (HEI).

Several submissions suggested using AI, such as writing documentation, categorising referrals, and improving searchability of QHEPS. While there is huge potential in AI, ensuring we get the right technology that is scalable, sustainable and affordable, while meeting our tight privacy and confidentiality requirements is key. Digital Metro North is looking at programs and approaches which would allow us to process the huge number of documents we'd need to make it function the way we need.

Values in Action

As I've been talking to staff right across Metro North over the last few months, several people from different areas have mentioned feeling left out of the loop with changes that affect them.

I know many decisions are made quickly, and timelines are sometimes outside our control, but I wanted to ask everyone to be respectful and to take a moment to discuss what's happening and how changes might impact people's work. This will ensure greater transparency, better decisions and greater ownership of the decision.

Take care.
Nick



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**

If you have received this email and do not work for Metro North please follow this link to be removed from the mailing list.

[Email us](#)