

Executive Message

Metro North Health



Summary:

- Crazy Socks for Docs Day
- SET Forum
- Health Equity update
- Putting patients first
- Queensland Day

[Message feedback](#)

Chief Executive Nick Steele



Audience: All staff



Read time: 5+ min



For: Information

Hi Everyone,

Today is Crazy Socks for Docs Day. This day acknowledges the mental health challenges within the medical profession, however it is also a reminder of the impact of these challenges upon our broader health workforce.

As Australia's largest health service employing over 25,000 staff, we are exposed to patients and consumers of all ages and stages of life, who experience a wide range of clinical, cultural, mental and socio-economic issues.



The work we do changes people's lives however it is the staff on the frontline who are most exposed to the complex patient groups and communities we care for.

People choose to work in health because they want to help and care for other people. This is a noble sentiment that should be respected by everyone, however in reality, working in health care can be demanding and complex.

We are seeing more and more patients each year come through our doors, and the complexity and vulnerability of these patients is increasing. Our duty as health care workers is to find a way to provide high-quality care for these people, often under the

most challenging circumstances. And we do this extremely well as an organisation.

In my many visits with staff and teams across our facilities, I have been well informed about the wide range of challenges that staff face within their day-to-day work. Each facility and directorate, each specialty and discipline, each program and team has its own set of issues and barriers they must manage when supporting the delivery of care to patients and consumers on a daily basis.

I talk about barriers because they can often be the source of frustration for our staff. Compounded with the everyday pressure of a fast-paced health care environment, these barriers can not only get in the way of our best work getting done, they can also take a toll on staff well-being. This is an important consideration when striving to build a workplace where people can be their best, which is a key focus within our Metro North Strategic Plan.

While wearing crazy socks for the day is a light-hearted way of acknowledging a very serious issue, it is also an opportunity to acknowledge all staff across Metro North for the honourable work you do. The high-level work we undertake as guardians of people's health, carries a responsibility that unfortunately, sometimes comes with a personal cost to one's well-being. As an organisation, we need to be accountable and available to provide support when it does.

Metro North offers a range of support options for staff. Staff can talk to a [Peer Responder](#), a [Staff Psychologist](#) or take advantage of our employee assistance provider, [TELUS Health](#). Find out more about wellbeing support services available to you on [QHEPS](#).



Crazy Socks for Docs Day celebrations at COH (left) and TPCH (right)

SET Forum

Yesterday the Metro North Senior Executive Team (SET) met at North Lakes Health Precinct. The staff forum was standing room only as well as many people joining via Teams. With the Business Case for Change currently open for consultation, what it means for Community and Oral Health (COH) was the main topic of discussion.

Some of the things we talked about were the need to spread the word about the spectrum of services COH delivers amongst colleagues in acute facilities, and how to increase referrals from hospitals to community or home-based services. One suggestion worth investigating further is having a greater visibility of vacant virtual beds with some

escalation processes to ensure we're making the most of available capacity.

We also talked about the need to ensure patients referred to community and home-based services are getting to the right place, not just out of hospital, so they don't end up having a longer journey than necessary.

Regardless of whether the current proposed changes go ahead, we need to increase visibility of patient flow across all Metro North services. Digital Metro North (DMN) is looking at longer term IT solutions for Hospital in the Home, and logistics options for COH.

We are looking at how ieMR can benefit COH, as well as other enabling systems. Some of this is contingent on larger pieces of work being considered by DMN, such as replacing HBCIS before we can look at COH having its own PAS, and where and how ieMR and other IT training is delivered. We briefly discussed Fabric, a data and analytics platform, which isn't widely available to staff, but genuine access needs can be discussed with DMN Data and Analytics.

It was a fantastic discussion, and I encourage COH staff to provide feedback on the [Business Case for Change](#) so we capture all your suggestions.

Health Equity update

Health Equity Showcase

Last week, I had the privilege of attending the Metro North Health Equity Showcase, delivered in partnership with Children's Health Queensland. The showcase provided a valuable opportunity to connect with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members and key stakeholders, and to share the outstanding work being undertaken across our organisations to advance health equity and better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families.

Ongoing engagement is essential to ensuring our work is informed by community voices and delivers meaningful, lasting impact. I particularly valued the opportunity to spend time with Elders, community members, stakeholders, and our partners at Children's Health Queensland. Our partnership demonstrates what is possible when we work together across the health system to deliver more connected, coordinated and culturally responsive care for our communities.



North Lakes Dialysis Unit Aboriginal artwork unveiling

Yesterday I had the privilege to attend the recent unveiling of nine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks at the North Lakes Dialysis Unit.

The installation brings together artworks representing major Metro North facilities, creating a welcoming and culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, families and staff. For many patients who regularly access the service, these artworks provide a visible reflection of culture, connection and belonging within the healthcare setting.

I would like to thank North Lakes Dialysis Unit Nurse Unit Manager Kylie Dunbar-Reid and Dr Shaun Chandler and team, COH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team for their collaboration to bring this important project to life. Your efforts will have a lasting impact on patients, families and staff for years to come.



Putting patients first

I recently learned about another one of Metro North's great patient-centred care initiatives - the new Patient Initiated Follow Up pathway for ear, nose and throat (ENT) patients being piloted by STARS.

The new pathway supports patient-centred decision making, by empowering patients to request a follow up outpatient specialist appointment when required, rather than attend a routine appointment unnecessarily. This prevents unnecessary disruption, travel and cost to the patient and ensures that patients receive the care they need. Read more [here](#).

Queensland Day

Tomorrow, Saturday 6 June is Queensland Day. This day commemorates the historic moment when Queensland started its path to become the state we know. Queensland Day is a day to be proud of who we are as Queenslanders and the special people, places and lifestyle aspects that set us apart. As employees of Queensland's largest health service, we should all be extremely proud of the important role we play in helping improve the health and wellbeing of our fellow Queenslanders.

Read [here](#) to find out more about how you get involved in Queensland Day.

Take care.
Nick



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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