

Executive Message

Metro North Health



Summary:

- One Front Door initiative
- Improving workplace culture
- Executive update
- Patient compliment.

Message feedback

Chief Executive Nick Steele



Audience: All staff



Read time: 5+ min



For: Information

Hi Everyone,

In my message last week, I highlighted the priorities and focus areas for the upcoming financial year. I, along with the Board and Senior Executive Team, acknowledge there is a lot of work required across the organisation to ensure these priorities are supported and achieved. Since I joined Metro North in September, there has been a significant emphasis placed on looking at ways of doing things differently and working together across the network to ensure we can continue to deliver safe, high quality care patients, within available resources. There is already a lot innovative work being done across the health service to support new and more streamlined methods and models of care delivery and operation, to ensure that more patients can receive the care they need in a timely way.



An example is Community and Oral Health's *One Front Door* initiative which supports an improved process around the flow and management of community referrals. One Front Door is a new streamlined process that will ensure that referrals are managed and never sent back to the referrer. There is no change to the primary referral pathway [Refer](#), but behind the scenes a newly established Navigation team will now support complex or

redirected referrals to the appropriate service. This is about improving patient flow, reducing duplication, and working more cohesively as one Metro North. You can read more about this change [here](#).

It is improvements like this that demonstrate how re-organising existing processes at the operational level brings greater efficiency and can benefit patients and consumers at the point of care.

Improving workplace culture

Improving our workplace culture is an ongoing priority and there's been a lot of engagement and consultation which is turning into action. The recently launched culture plan, [Our Metro North – Stronger Teams, Better Care](#), is building on existing work to remove barriers for you on the ground and empowering you to make changes that improve the way you work.

If you have a local challenge you need support to solve, we want to hear from you. No matter how small the problem, I invite you to express your interest to be one of the teams selected to test practical solutions with support from HELIX Hub and our Organisational Culture team.

This is not about finding more time - the support team will work within your and your team's existing rhythms to troubleshoot solutions. [Express your interest](#)

Spotlighting a small change with big impact

I am pleased to share some positive feedback we've received through our culture work which highlights the importance of having clarity around decision making and escalation in the clinical setting.

Reflection from TPCH Paediatric Services team

It is fair that staff want clarity about which decisions they can confidently make within agreed clinical boundaries, and to be equally clear on the situations they should seek support or escalate care. While some of that is structural and policy related, a lot of it is also cultural. That clarity has built confidence in our children's departments because people know they are trusted to make decisions, while also knowing where support is.

Patient safety remains the priority, but we've removed unnecessary hesitation and uncertainty.

Leaders are encouraged to ask their teams, "could everyone clearly explain what decisions they own, and which are the ones they should escalate?".

Executive update

This week, we've seen some changes to a number of key roles across Metro North.

New CKW Executive Director welcomed

I extend a warm welcome to Jamie Spencer who commenced as CKW's newly appointed

Executive Director this week. Jamie brings extensive experience from senior roles across major hospital networks and health services in Australia, including leadership of statewide reform programs, and delivery of improvements in emergency care, patient flow, digital health and aged care. He most recently served as General Manager of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital. We are pleased to have Jamie on board as part of the Metro North team.



I also want to thank Dr Ted Chamberlain for his work acting in the role and his video message last week to CKW staff about the simple but meaningful act of spreading kindness every day.

Nurse leaders farewelled

During the past fortnight, Metro North has farewelled two longstanding senior nurse leaders – Cherie Franks and Katrina Kalmar.



Cherie Franks, TPC's outgoing Director of Nursing of 14 years, commenced her career at TPC in 1998. During her 40-year plus professional life, she has held a variety of clinical and leadership roles, always remaining a steadfast advocate for the nursing profession and placing an emphasis on the critical role of multidisciplinary teams in achieving best patient care. Cherie's contributions to nursing within TPC and Metro North have been significant, and have had a positive and lasting impact. Cherie is retiring to spend more time with family. A wonderful celebration of Cherie's contribution was held at TPC during the week, where some wonderful reflections of her career were shared.

Katrina Kalmar also concluded her 40-year plus nursing career as Caboolture Hospital's Nursing Director Patient Access and Clinical Effectiveness. She began her career in 1984 as a student nurse at the then Royal Brisbane Hospital, where she spent the next 28 years enhancing her clinical and leadership expertise. During her career, Katrina's focus shifted towards patient flow and access, and through her clinical leadership, she has made important contributions to innovation and patient care across Metro North as one of the nursing leaders in Metro North's Patient Access Coordination Hub along with her time at RBWH and CKW.



I thank Cherie and Katrina for their excellent service to Metro North, our nursing workforce and our patients, and wish them all the very best for a well-earned retirement.

Patient compliment

I would like to share an inspiring compliment from a patient at STARS which demonstrates the role of innovation and compassion in the delivery of genuine person-centred care. Peter, who is living with motor neuron disease (MND) visited the Rehabilitation Engineering Centre for modifications to his wheelchair.

"They listened carefully. They observed how I moved, how I drove, where I struggled, and

what was changing in my body. Instead of offering a generic solution, they approached my situation with creativity, expertise and compassion.

What sets this team apart is that they do not see equipment first, they see the person first. They are driven by a genuine desire to help people remain independent, comfortable and connected to life for as long as possible. They think outside the box. They innovate. They problem solve. And they do it with humility and care.

I can say hand on heart that I am still able to drive my wheelchair today because of this team.

For people living with progressive diseases like MND, their work is not just about modifications or machinery, it is about dignity, freedom and quality of life”.

What a great example of how the work we do in Metro North changes health outcomes for our patients.

Take care.
Nick

Special farewell event - Dr Liz Rushbrook

A **special farewell event** for outgoing Chief Medical Officer Dr Liz Rushbrook will be held on Tuesday 21 July, 7am to 8.30am in the RBWH Education Centre foyer.

All interested staff are welcome to attend.

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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