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Executive Message
Metro North Health

Summary:

- HeIDI Forum
- Heart Lung Stream Advisory Council meeting
- SEC staff forum
- Alanna Geary farewell
- Queensland Technology Future Fund open for applications
- Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan 2026-2030
- COO update
- Executive updates - ED Mental Health, ED TPCH
- BCFC COO Supplementary vidcast next week

Message feedback

Chief Executive Nick Steele

Audience: All staff **Read time:** 5+ min **For:** Information



Hi Everyone,

This week I attended a number of forums and presentations across Metro North which have highlighted some of the high level, innovative work our health service is leading and supporting. Even though I have now been with Metro North for well over 12 months, I am constantly amazed by the cutting edge and transformative work we undertake across the health service each day – through our research centres and institutes, as well as through our acute clinical areas, virtual models and community health settings.

While the work is all different, it is driven by one common element: your commitment. Without constant dedication to improve patient care, all of the work we do here would not succeed to the level it does; nor would it continue to elevate or reach its potential.

What I observe every day across Metro North are people – all of you – who strive to make health care the best it can be for our patients and community. Admittedly this is a

constant challenge in such a complex environment like Metro North, but it is something you all do exceptionally well. You persistently embrace challenges and find new ways of doing things with commitment, compassion and enthusiasm to ensure our patients receive the best possible care. For this, thank you.

HeIDI Forum

This week's Herston Infectious Diseases Institute (HeIDI) Forum was an ideal opportunity to learn about some of the remarkable research and work being done by our local teams and by clinicians across the country, in the area of infectious diseases. We know from experience that infection control, infection prevention and pandemic planning play a vital role in how we can respond to the needs of our community, which is why HeIDI's work is so significant, especially with Metro North's growing strategic focus on research and innovation.

HeIDI is one of Metro North's five established institutes, supporting our health service to be a leading hub in Australia for clinical infectious disease research. Since HeIDI was established in 2020, researchers have generated more than $20 million in research funding to lead local, national and international research activities from Metro North, with more than 20 projects in progress across a range of clinical specialties.

These projects are having a targeted impact on how we treat, care and save the lives of patients through new practice models, new tests for critical illnesses and novel discoveries about disease processes. The effect of HeIDI's work is far reaching and I am proud that Metro North is able to support such an innovative and talented group of people. Well done to the HeIDI team on organising such a stimulating forum.

Heart Lung Stream Advisory Council meeting

On Tuesday, I linked into the Heart Lung Stream's final Advisory Council meeting, as we transition to our new Clinical Network structure. Over the past decade, the Heart Lung Clinical Stream has played a pivotal role in connecting clinicians, services and partners across Metro North and Queensland to improve care for patients with cardiac, respiratory and sleep conditions. Through a strong focus on collaboration, innovation and clinical leadership, the Stream has supported the development of new models of care, expanded access to specialist services, strengthened regional partnerships and driven improvements in quality and consistency of care. I'd like to share a small selection of the Stream's key achievements during this period:

- Establishment of Tamaya, the First Nations Heart Lung Health Equity Council
- Implementation of the Urban Respiratory Outreach Clinic (UROC) and the Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE)
- Implementation of the BeFIT 4 Lungs program for people with COPD
- Provision of telerehabilitation across the State through the Pulmonary and Cardiac Telerehabilitation (PaCT) program
- Implementation of the Rapid Access to Heart Failure Therapy Service (RAHFTS) across all Metro North facilities
- Establishment of Service Level Agreements with Cairns and Hinterland HHS, Central West HHS, Central Queensland HHS, and Townsville HHS for the provision of specialist cardiology, respiratory and sleep services
- Development of a minimum standards model to guide non-invasive ventilation.



Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE) clinic



The cardiology team visiting the Charleville and Western Areas Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Centre to conduct specialist cardiology screening services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

While the Stream is concluding, the outcomes of its work will continue. Many initiatives that began as pilot projects are now embedded into business-as-usual practice, while others have expanded across Metro North and Queensland, receiving local, state and national recognition for their contribution to better health outcomes. For Metro North more broadly, the outcomes achieved by Heart Lung demonstrate the value of bringing clinicians, consumers, and partners together to solve complex healthcare challenges and create more equitable, connected, and sustainable services for our communities – an approach we need to take forward and embrace into the future.

SEC staff forum

The Strategic Executive Committee (SEC, formerly SET) visited the Nundah Community Health Centre team to catch up with staff from across multiple service lines including mental health, children's health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Community and Oral Health.

The staff forum was attended well both online and in person, with the topic of conversation focussed heavily on the importance of out of hospital care from an acute and sub-acute perspective, especially given the continued growth in population in the Metro North catchment area.

Out of hospital care provides a safe alternate to hospital care and will play an important role in the coming decades especially those services like Hospital in the Home, Interim Care, Residential Aged Care District Assessment and Referral Service, Older Persons Emergency Network and community-based services which are being delivered in homes and aged care facilities. These types of services which deliver care closer to home, are essential to our current demand management strategies, and will continue to be critical moving forward.

SEC members also provided updates on occupational violence prevention, including that Metro North will be participating in a statewide operations safety training program in collaboration with Queensland Police Service and trialling new personal protection equipment for security officers. We also talked about new nursing graduate recruitment and other key priorities for the health service relating to patient flow and access, complex patients, Queensland Ambulance Service partnerships and outpatients.

Questions asked by staff during the forum related to improved communication between acute and sub-acute facilities to support hospital avoidance, and changes to hospital admissions since the aged care reform. Thank you to everyone who attended the forum in person or on Teams and to those who put forward their suggestions for improvement and questions to SEC.

Executive update

Staff are invited to attend a farewell event for Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Alanna Geary on Tuesday 8 December, 7am - 8.30am in the RBWH Education Centre Foyer to acknowledge her longstanding career with Metro North. I will share some of Alanna's professional contributions in an upcoming email closer to her time of leaving.

Queeensland Technology Future Fund - expressions of interest open

Expressions of Interest for the 2027-28 Queensland Technology Future Fund (QTFF) Round 1 are currently open until Friday 20 November 2026.

QTFF, administered by Queensland Health, provides grant funding to support cutting-edge medical technologies, clinical innovations, and research trials across Queensland's hospital and health services.

Metro North has previously been successful in securing funds via the QTFF for a variety of research and innovation initiatives that support improved patient care including the trial of AI-powered medical imaging software to assist radiologists in reviewing x-rays and accelerating clinical decision making.

For more information visit the QTFF sharepoint site which also has a webinar recording about the process.

Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan 2026-2030

At Metro North, we are committed to growing, supporting and retaining a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

This is vital to delivering culturally safe care, building organisational capability, and improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.

To support this commitment, I am pleased to launch our first *Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan 2026-2030.*

The plan provides a clear roadmap to support enhancement of workforce representation, retention and career progression outlined within the five priority areas:

1. Workforce growth and representation
2. Culturally safe recruitment and onboarding
3. Retention, wellbeing and cultural safety
4. Capability, scope of practice and career progression
5. Cultural capability, anti-racism and organisational accountability.

Together, we have an opportunity to build a workforce that reflects the communities we serve and supports better health outcomes for generations to come.

Take care.
Nick

Acting Chief Operating Officer

Alison Ewens



Audience: All staff **Read time:** 2 min **For:** Information

Hi Everyone,

It was great to attend my first Metro North SEC staff forum yesterday at Nundah Community Health Centre. Thank you to everyone who attended. I am enjoying meeting people across the HHS and seeing all the facilities. Although I'm still getting used to navigating Brisbane after so many years living and working at the Gold Coast.

COO forum

This week I also attended my first statewide HHS COO forum. The COO forum brings together HHSs to discuss system wide opportunities for improvement and collaboration. The focus of the forum was reviewing winter planning 2026, with elective surgery, gastrointestinal endoscopy, mental health and patient flow as the priorities.

Executive updates

Executive Director Mental Health
We welcomed Dr Leanne Geppert as the new Executive Director Metro North Mental Health this week.

Leanne has hit the ground running with a focus on preparing for accreditation, anticipated increased demand over the Christmas period, and opportunities to build capacity and strengthen services.

Executive Director TPCH
As you know, Tami Photinos is leaving Metro North after 41 years. Tami's last day is Friday 13 November.

Tami has been Executive Director at The Prince Charles Hospital for the last almost six years. While I haven't had the pleasure of working with Tami as long as many of you, I want to acknowledge her exceptional career with Metro North, both in her executive roles and her nursing career.

Tami started nursing at Royal Brisbane Hospital in 1985 and trained as a midwife at the Royal Women's Hospital in 1990. She spent 30 years at the now Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, including as ED Women's and Newborns Services.

In her 41 years with Metro North, Tami has also worked on projects and election commitments with the Department of Health, and ED Community and Oral Health, as well as relieving in the COO role. Tami was awarded the Australia Day Medal and Humanitarian

Overseas Service Medal for her work following the 2004 Indian Ocean / Banda Aceh tsunami.

Acting ED TPCH
Geoff Grima will be Acting Executive Director TPCH from 16 November until 3 January 2027. Melanie Dubbelde will commence as Acting ED from 4 January 2027 if the recruitment process is still underway.

Vidcast - Metro North Business Case for Change COO Supplementary

I will be holding a vidcast on Tuesday with Lorna Morton to provide an update on the implementation of the COO Supplementation Business Case for Change. Join us on Tuesday 10 November at 12pm.

Register for vidcast

Regards,
Alison

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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