

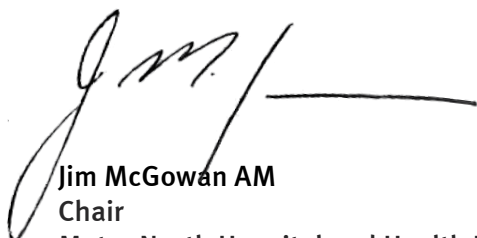
Message from the Board Chair and Chief Executive

The COVID-19 pandemic has put healthcare in the international spotlight. Across Metro North, although local cases have been relatively low, the scale and breadth of our response has been impressive. Our Metro North Health Emergency Operations Centre stood up at the end of January, before the first Australian confirmed patient. This early action has put Metro North, and Queensland, in a strong position to confine the outbreak and swiftly respond when needed.

Our response to COVID-19 has seen a rapid acceleration in innovation, with virtual healthcare becoming more prevalent. Changes to models of care and ways of working were activated immediately as clinical and non-clinical staff from across the organisation came together to make things happen.

During 2019-20, Metro North increased our service delivery. Emergency Department (ED) presentations increased by 17,802 to 318,415, with 34,672 presentations to fever clinics. Admissions from EDs reached 113,740. Despite pausing non-urgent activity during our initial pandemic response, our staff performed 42,698 emergency and elective surgeries. We provided 1,558,938 outpatient occasions of service, 55,492 more than the previous year. During the height of the COVID-19 response, 67 per cent of outpatient appointments were conducted via phone or videoconferencing.

To meet this increase in demand, we invested \$3.196 billion in healthcare, up from \$2.874 billion the previous financial year. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we achieved an operating surplus of \$31.8 million, largely due to concerted efforts to maximise our resources and reduce waste across the health service.



Jim McGowan AM
Chair
Metro North Hospital and Health Board

Metro North employed an additional 553 clinical staff in medical, nursing and allied health positions. Our total full-time equivalent staffing numbers grew from 16,184 to 16,818 at the end of the financial year. As part of our commitment to caring for staff, Metro North developed a staff wellbeing strategy which was adapted to provide specific support for staff directly caring for COVID-19 patients. A Chief Wellbeing Officer was also appointed to support staff wellbeing.

The Herston Quarter Redevelopment Project continued with the Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS) reaching its full height. STARS recruitment and fit out were ongoing at the end of financial year. Work continued on the Caboolture Hospital Redevelopment Project with the interim emergency department opening. Redcliffe Hospital redevelopment included construction of the multistorey car park, additional operating theatre, and refurbishment of the medical imaging department.

2020-21 will see Metro North continue to be COVID-19 ready including both the careful monitoring of hospital bed capacity and appropriate streaming of patients whilst focusing on recovery of those services that were delayed during the intense COVID-19 preparation period.



Shaun Drummond
Chief Executive
Metro North Hospital and Health Service