

MNHHS GP Fact Sheet

Management of Category 3 Specialist Outpatient Referrals from 1 July 2020

Background

As you are aware, a range of restrictions on Category 3 referral acceptance and appointments were implemented to deal with the predicted peak of COVID-19 cases. The Director General Queensland Health held a consultation meeting with key primary care stakeholders on 16 June 2020 and has confirmed that Queensland Health facilities will commence a graduated acceptance of Category 3 referrals as of 1 July 2020.

Previously returned Category 3 referrals received between 22 March 2020 and 30 June 2020, where Specialist consultation is still required, will be accepted from 1 July 2020. Given the anticipated volume, it could take up to 31 July 2020 to process these referrals. General Practitioners are invited to re-refer patients to the relevant Metro North HHS hospital.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service will follow the below process for re-referred Category 3 referrals and any new Category 3 referrals into the future. Category 1 and 2 referrals will continue to be progressed as normal.

We would like to thank General Practitioners for their patience and understanding during these unprecedented changes due to COVID-19.

Process for re-referred and new Category 3 referrals

- General Practitioners are invited to re-refer any Category 3 referrals that were returned due to COVID-19 between 22 March 2020 and 30 June 2020 where Specialist consultation is still required.
- Please clearly state in the Reason for Referral that the referral was returned and ensure all clinical information is included.
- MNHHS will date all Category 3 re-referrals received in July with the date of 1 July 2020. This is irrespective of the date they are received during July 2020.
- All referrals need to be submitted and received individually as most referral management systems cannot separate multiple referrals sent in one (1) fax to the HHS. Multiple referrals received in one fax will be returned to the GP to be re-sent separately.
- Any new referrals assigned Category 3 received and accepted from 1 July 2020 to 31 July 2020 are unlikely to be processed prior to 1 August 2020.
- All referrals, regardless of date received will be categorised as per State-wide Referral Guidelines. Please refer to Metro North Refer Your Patient website for more information https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/specialist_service/refer-your-patient

Support Details

We would like to assure you that referral receipt processes and staffing allocations have been reviewed to ensure that the re-referral process can be progressed as promptly as possible. Despite this, a significant increase in Category 3 referrals will impact on the processing time for all referrals.

Should you require any assistance or further information, including advice on affected referrals you have made during this period, please contact the below:

Facility	Contact
Outpatient Strategies	MetroNorthGPLO@health.qld.gov.au