

Major review of medical scans at Caboolture Hospital to include 3,500 more patients



By Antonia O'Flaherty

ABC Radio Brisbane

Public Health

Mon 13 Oct 2025 at 2:29pm



Metro North Health is reviewing the scans of thousands of patients after it emerged that they may not have been checked by doctors. (ABC News: Chris Gillette)

In short:

A clinical team is re-examining the scans of thousands of patients at a major south-east Queensland hospital after it emerged imaging results may not have been reviewed by doctors.

The number of patients involved has now increased from 9,000 to more than 12,500.

What's next?

The review will continue until all of the scans have been checked.

A major review of medical scans at Queensland's Caboolture Hospital has been widened to include more than 3,500 additional patients, meaning the

imaging results of more than 12,500 people may not have been checked by clinicians.

Last month the ABC revealed that the medical images of 9,000 patients at the hospital's Specialist Outpatient department needed to be reviewed after it emerged they may not have been checked by doctors.

The issue, affecting patients dating back to April 2023, only became public after the ABC sent questions to Metro North Health on September 30.

The health service later confirmed they were alerted to the problem after a patient, who has since died, went to the emergency department in a serious condition unaware they had advanced cancer.

The disease had been detected in medical scans ordered for another medical condition five weeks earlier but the results had not been followed up.

Do you know more?

- Contact Antonia O'Flaherty at Oflaherty.Antonia@abc.net.au or on antoniaoflaherty@protonmail.com

A further four patients who did not receive the results of their medical scans have been now contacted by the health service since the review began two weeks ago.

The problem stemmed from a change to internal process in April 2023 which meant paper copies of medical imaging reports may not have been given to clinicians, and the hospital could not be certain that electronic reports had been reviewed either.

The imaging include X-rays, CT scans and MRI and ultrasound studies for surgical, respiratory, cardiac, and paediatric patients.

Images being checked and cleared

Health Minister Tim Nicholls today confirmed the review had now been widened to include the scans of 12,529 patients.

"Since the review commenced, 69 per cent of images have been checked and cleared and that equates to more than 7,341 patients," he said.

Of those patients, four have been contacted by the hospital to "reassure them, and reconfirm the next steps in their planned care", he said.

Mr Nicholls said aside from the initial patient, no other adverse outcomes had been detected yet.

"That might change as more information comes to hand," he said.

When asked to explain why the number of patients whose scans need to be reviewed had increased, a Metro North Health spokesperson said in a statement the increase "reflects the clearer picture emerging as patient data is validated and cross-checked through the review".

That is despite Metro North Health's chief medical officer Elizabeth Rushbrook describing the initial figure of 9,000 patients as "the outside largest number" and the "worst case scenario" when first announcing the review on September 30.

The spokesperson said the clinical team had reviewed 81 per cent of high priority scans and cleared them, and was aiming to complete most of the high priority reviews as soon as possible.

"Four patients have been contacted to arrange follow-up appointments. Patient medical information remains confidential," the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said Metro North Health was working closely with affected patients to ensure they received the care and support they needed.

Not all patients will be contacted

When announcing the review earlier this month, Dr Rushbrook said a clinical team would be set up to review 20,000 images relating to 9,000 patients, giving priority to high-risk cases.

At the time, Dr Rushbrook said only those patients whose scans had warranted follow-up care, but did not receive it would be contacted.

"If they haven't been actioned then they'll be referred to further senior clinical review and the patient will be involved and informed at that time," Dr Rushbrook said on September 30.



Metro North Health says the problem is confined to its Specialist Outpatient service. (ABC News: Chris Gillette)

It's not the first time information about the review has changed.

Metro North Health first published information about the review on its website late on September 30, only to later delete the information.

The following day Dr Rushbrook said the information had been deleted in order to make changes, and the announcement and FAQs were then later published online again.

Patients of the Specialist Outpatient department between April 1, 2023 and September 4, 2025 who are concerned their medical imaging results are impacted can contact the hospital on [07 5316 5163](tel:0753165163).

The Metro North Health spokesperson said there was no indication that any other departments or Metro North Health facilities had been affected by this issue.

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EXTRACT FROM HEALTH MINISTER PRESS CONFERENCE
ON OCTOBER 26: 21 :

Health Minister Tim Nicholls: And I think that'd be your option too, get the facts.

The facts are, I got a phone call at 10 o'clock on a Friday night.

On a Wednesday I asked the Director General to investigate and report back on what the full extent of it was.

The director general then went and got that information, and he received that information, I think, a full report from Metro North on the 29th of September.

Having learned of the extent of that matter, it was then escalated through to the Premier's office, but Minister Last was aware of it, and was aware of the investigations being undertaken by the Director General to report back because my Chief of Staff was working, my policy advisors were working, and Minister Last was working.

I think that's a pretty reasonable answer. Okay, we've got to go. I've got another meeting. Sorry. I mean, I've been pretty generous. So Thank you very much.

Queensland health minister knew of hospital failures before going on leave



By Antonia O'Flaherty

ABC Radio Brisbane

Public Health

Wed 15 Oct 2025 at 8:53am



The Caboolture Hospital is at the centre of the controversy. (ABC News: Chris Gillette)

In short:

Queensland's health minister has told state parliament he knew about the death of a patient at Caboolture Hospital before he went on leave.

The patient's case triggered a major review into why medical scans were going unchecked by doctors at the hospital's outpatient service.

What's next?

The medical imaging of more than 12,500 patients is being reviewed by the hospital.

Queensland's health minister has revealed he knew about failures at Caboolture Hospital involving the death of a patient after delays to medical scan results, before he went on holiday when the issue later became public.

In early September a patient of the hospital's Specialist Outpatient Service went to the emergency department in a serious condition, unaware they had advanced cancer after a five-week delay to receiving their medical scan results.

The imaging results had not been reviewed by doctors, and the patient later died, triggering an investigation by Metro North Health.

In a statement to the ABC, health minister Tim Nicholls said his office was alerted to the case late on September 17.

Do you know more?

- Contact Antonia O'Flaherty at Oflaherty.Antonia@abc.net.au or on antoniaoflaherty@protonmail.com

The minister did not say whether he alerted other members of government to the issue, but that he asked the health department's director general to determine whether the issue would impact other patients.

By "late September" Metro North Health became aware it was a systemic issue at the outpatient service, initially believing the imaging results of up to 9,000 patients may not have been seen by doctors.

The number of patients involved has since increased to 12,529.

After the issues were revealed by the ABC, Queensland Premier David Crisafulli said the government had only been briefed on the issue on September 29.

The health minister was on leave from September 19, returning on October 13.



Health minister says he ordered internal investigation

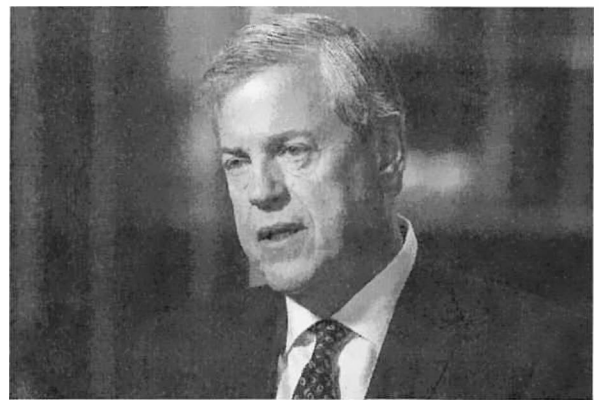
Mr Nicholls was asked in state parliament during Question Time whether he knew about the failures at the health service before he went on leave.

Mr Nicholls said when he became aware of the first case at Caboolture Hospital, he directed Queensland Health director-general David Rosengren to "carry out a thorough investigation" before he went on leave.

"So yes I was aware of the one case, and yes I discussed it with the director-general, and yes with the director-general we were concerned about the failures," he said.

"And yes we directed metro [north] health and their director of medical services to undertake a full scan and that is the appropriate way to go, we are a responsible government."

The minister told the ABC his office was first alerted to the extent of the issue on September 29.



Health minister Tim Nicholls. (ABC News: Chris Gillette)

In a statement, the Opposition leader Steven Miles said the health minister should not have "jetted overseas" after being told about the "major issue" at Caboolture Hospital.

"This is not a health bungle, this is a blatant failure of leadership, of ministerial responsibilities and of accountability".

The problem with medical scan results going unchecked at the outpatient service only became public after the ABC sent questions to Metro North Health on September 29.

In the statement that day Metro North Health told the ABC that the issue was identified "early in September" and described it as "a gap" in how medical imaging results were distributed within its Specialist Outpatients department.

The following day Metro North Health chief medical officer Elizabeth Rushbrook told media the health service became aware that it was a systemic issue by "late September" but did not provide specific dates.

The problem stemmed from an internal change to process in April 2023, which meant paper copies of imaging results may not have been given to clinicians, and the hospital couldn't be sure that electronic results were checked either.

Premier insists acting minister doing an 'excellent job'

At a media conference on September 30, Queensland Premier David Crisafulli said the government had only been briefed on the extent of the issue the day before.

"I've asked the health and hospital network to talk to Queenslanders today.

"I have this view that where information comes to light, it has to be shared, particularly where it impacts an individual," he said at the press conference.

During the same week, it also emerged that at Townsville's urology department some patients, some of whom have cancer, had not received test results or follow-up care, with Queensland Health launching a Part 9 investigation into the matter on September 29.

When asked if the health minister should return from leave, Mr Crisafulli said the acting minister, Dale Last, was doing an "excellent job".

Metro North Health said only patients who had imaging at the specialist outpatient service between April 1 2023 and September 4 2025 are affected and concerned patients can call the hospital on 07 5316 5163.

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Acting Minister for Health and Ambulance Services
[The Honourable Dale Last](#)

Statement from the Acting Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Metro North Health has informed me and the Director-General of Queensland Health of its decision to review the management of medical imaging results at Caboolture Hospital's Specialist Outpatient Department between 1 April 2023 and 4 September 2025.

As soon as the Government was briefed, Metro North Health was instructed to publicly detail the issue so Queenslanders were informed.

Up to 9,000 patients may have been impacted by a clinic process change made under the former Labor Government. This is deeply concerning and completely unacceptable.

The Crisafulli Government is committed to healing Labor's Health Crisis, and this review must get to the bottom of what went wrong and what must be fixed.

Metro North Health has committed to finalising the review for high-priority patients within two weeks, including identifying patients who may be affected and contacting them to provide follow-up care.

Metro North Health's actions to immediately strengthen processes around the management of medical imaging results are an important first step.

Most important are the patients and their loved ones who put their trust in Caboolture Hospital to manage their medical imaging results. Their care and wellbeing must, and will be, prioritised, as the necessary work is done to restore confidence in the hospital.

ENDS.

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28 OCT 2025

Tabled ☒

By Leave ☐

MP: Hon Dick

Clerk's Signature: _____