

MEDIA RELEASE

Save the ED for emergencies this Easter

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While Easter can be a time to relax, for many it's a time of increased social engagement and travel.

To avoid a trip to the emergency department (ED) this long weekend, people are being asked to keep safety front of mind.

Albury Wodonga Health's Chief Operating Officer, Emma Poland, said holiday periods often result in increases to ED presentations.

"More people are out and about, and on the roads, which means we can see higher numbers of injuries and accidents over the holiday period.

"Visitors to our area also don't have access to their regular doctor, and many local services will be closed or operating on limited hours.

"Services such as the Priority Primary Care Centre (PPCC) in Wodonga are available to medically assess people, provide advice and treatment for urgent, but non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries," Emma said.

The Wodonga PPCC is located at 1A & 2, White Box Rise Shopping Centre, 81 Victoria Cross Parade, Wodonga and is open Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Monday from 9am to 4.30pm. Bookings can be made online at: <http://www.sarkonmedicalcentre.com> or by calling 02 6064 1900.

Operator of Wodonga PPCC, Sarkon Medical Centre Practice Principal, Dr Niranjan Sarjapuram, said that people can attend the PPCC to access the treatment they need quicker.

"We offer pre-booked appointments but will see anyone who walks-in and requires urgent attention.

"Our team of nurses and doctors are available to help with conditions such as fever, mild infections and burns, sprains, minor bone breaks and cuts needing stitching, vomiting, allergies, constipation and abdominal pain.

"PPCC services are free for everyone, including people who do not have a Medicare card," Niranjan said.

Priority Primary Care Centres are an initiative funded by the Victorian Government and commissioned through Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to relieve pressure on hospital emergency departments.

Murray PHN CEO, Matt Jones, said it can be hard to see a GP urgently and that pressures on emergency departments can result in long wait times.

"PPCCs are helping keep emergency departments free for the people who need them most."

Patients arriving at the PPCC will be triaged to determine their suitability for the service. Those requiring non-urgent regular medical care will be redirected to their regular GP for ongoing management.

To learn more about PPCCs, visit betterhealth.vic.gov.au/priority-primary-care-centres

About us:

Murray PHN is one of 31 PHNs (Primary Health Networks) around Australia working to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health care and service systems. Across our region, we work with general practitioners (GPs), community health, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), pharmacy, aged care and allied health practitioners, and with acute services such as hospitals, specialists and emergency care.

The role of PHNs is to help to support and integrate the work of these important services to ensure that the people get the right care, in the right place, at the right time. In the Murray PHN region, which covers almost 100,000 sq km of regional Victoria, we work to develop and maintain sustainable models of primary health care for our communities.

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