

Monday, 17 August 2020

GPs should be first port of call when you're sick

South Western Sydney doctors are urging the community to make their GP their first port of call when they're sick and save hospital emergency departments for emergencies during the busy winter flu season.

Elderslie GP Matthew Gray said this winter it was important for sick patients to consider their medical care options and their regular GP was the best place to start.

"Having a regular GP is vital to keeping you well and staying well," he said.

"GPs can help you with short-term problems and chronic conditions and can continue to care for you throughout your life. If you're sick of an evening or on the weekend and your GP is not open, visit after-hours services – keep the emergency department for emergencies."

Bowral GP Jo Senior said sick patients' first port of call should be their GP

"It's been a difficult time for everyone lately, but GPs want you to know that we're still here for you," she said.

"Even during the coronavirus pandemic, it's safe to visit your GP. If you can avoid the emergency department, save the emergency department for emergencies and call your GP first."

If patients are seriously sick or hurt they should go to the hospital emergency department for treatment.

However, Dr Rebecca Davis, specialty emergency physician at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, said GPs played a key role in dealing with many medical conditions that did not need attention in a busy emergency department.

"Some of the symptoms which might bring patients to the emergency department included severe chest pain, trouble breathing, severe burns or unconsciousness or feeling seriously unwell," she said.

Dr Omar Albavati, emergency doctor at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, has reminded the community to practice good hand hygiene this winter and to cover their mouths with their elbows or use a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing.

"If you feel sick, stay home, don't socialise, either call your GP or call triple 000," he said.

South Western Sydney PHN is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting general practitioners, practice nurses and other primary health providers to deliver the best possible care for their patients. Our aim is to improve access to quality local health care for the all residents living in the local government areas of Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee.

For media interviews contact
Michelle Pozo
Media and Communications
Officer
T: 4632 3000

www.swsphn.com.au
Level 3, 1 Bolger Street
Campbelltown NSW 2560
PO Box 90 Macarthur Square NSW 2560
T: 4632 3000 F: 4625 9466