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Do you know where to go when your doctor is closed this Holiday Season?

Did you know that injuries due to preventable accidents spike during the Christmas-New Year period? If you or your family find yourself with a non life-threatening illness or injury this festive season, the emergency department is not your only option.

Wentworth Healthcare, the provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network, is encouraging residents in the Blue Mountains to consider after hours or urgent care services rather than presenting to your local hospital.

Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay, said that many people are unaware of the alternative options available outside of their GP's regular office hours or when their illness or injury feels urgent but not severe enough for the emergency department.

"If you need medical help after hours, on weekends, or over the holidays, you don't always need to wait. **The Doctor Closed website** helps you find nearby GPs who offer after hours care, as well as your closest urgent care clinic or service."

In the Blue Mountains, **13SICK National Home Doctor** is available for residents in the lower Blue Mountains (east of Linden), weeknights from 6:00 PM, Saturdays from noon, and throughout Sundays and public holidays.

Residents can also travel to the **Penrith Medicare Urgent Care Clinic, located inside Our Medical, 2227 Wolseley Street at Penrith Homemaker Centre**. The Centre is open 8 AM – 8 PM, seven days a week, 365 days a year, including Christmas day, for treatment of minor illnesses and injuries that can't wait for your usual GP, such as sprains, cuts, minor burns, stomach issues, UTIs, and more. They also have on-site radiology, pathology and pharmacy.

While radiology will be closed for the upcoming public holidays, on-site pathology will be available on public holidays and weekends from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM and pharmacy will be available on public holidays and weekends from 8:00 AM to 10 PM.

"The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic provides additional and timely access to healthcare, without the need for an appointment, for those with urgent but not life-threatening illnesses or injuries, leaving emergency departments for those who need it most," said Ms Reay.

"All services are free for Medicare cardholders, and patients have access to a team of healthcare professionals without the long wait times often associated with non-critical presentations at emergency departments," she said.

A walk-in after hours GP clinic is also located at **Nepean Village Shopping Centre**. It is open Monday to Friday, 6:00 PM to midnight, and on weekends and public holidays, 3:00 PM to midnight. **Penrith 24-Hour Pharmacy is located** at 438 High Street, Penrith which is also open all day, every day, including Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Years Day.

In addition to these services, Ms Reay mentioned that if you or someone you know are experiencing mental health concerns or crisis during the festive season, to remember that the **Penrith Head to Health (Medicare Mental Health) Centre** is open **7 days per week, 365 days a year, including public holidays**. The centre's opening hours are 1:00pm - 9:30pm (Monday,



Wednesday – Sunday) and from 1:00pm - 5:00pm on Tuesdays. The Centre will be open 1:00pm – 9.30pm on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day.

“We’re proud to fund these after hours services to help our community access timely care and avoid the strain on our region’s hospitals, especially during the busy holiday period,” said Ms. Reay.

“I encourage everyone to visit www.DoctorClosed.com.au to find out what other local healthcare options are available,” Ms Reay concluded.

Further information if needed like event details

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