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This holiday season, the emergency department is not your only option...

Did you know that 12% of emergency room presentations in NSW could have been treated by a GP? This holiday season, if you have a non life-threatening illness or injury, the emergency department is not your only option.

Wentworth Healthcare, the provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network, fund a variety of after hours primary healthcare services in the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Lithgow and Penrith local government areas to help local residents find medical care for non life-threatening illnesses and injuries when their usual doctor is not available.

According to Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Ms Lizz Reay, most people would prefer to see a GP rather than go to an emergency department, but many people don't know what other options are available when their usual doctor is closed. Wentworth Healthcare's website [DoctorClosed.com.au](https://www.doctorclosed.com.au) helps people to find local options.

"If you or your family needs medical assistance at night, on weekends or on public holidays, in some cases a long wait in the emergency department may not be necessary. Our Doctor Closed website allows local residents to search for a GP who is open after hours, for doctors who can make home visits or for Urgent Care Services. You can also use the online symptom checker, find pharmacies that are open, or talk to a health professional 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on the *healthdirect* helpline," said Ms Reay.

"The Doctor Closed website also has translated pages in six different languages, making the information accessible for multicultural communities," she added.

One example of the services that can be found on the [DoctorClosed.com.au](https://www.doctorclosed.com.au) website is the Penrith Medicare Urgent Care Clinic, located inside Our Medical, 2227 Wolseley Street at Penrith Homemaker Centre. The Clinic can treat those with urgent but non life-threatening illnesses or injuries, such as closed fractures, injuries requiring stitching, minor burns, leg ulcers, gastro, or conditions requiring IV rehydration, urinary tract infections, upper respiratory tract conditions, ear, nose and throat infections, rashes, small abscess drainage and more. X-ray facilities, pathology and a pharmacy are available on site.

"The Penrith Urgent Care Clinic opened in August and accepts walk-ins from 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM, seven days a week, 365 days a year, including Christmas day. 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," said Ms Reay.

Some other examples of available services that can be found on the [DoctorClosed.com.au](https://www.doctorclosed.com.au) website include:

- **Penrith After Hours Doctors:** A walk in clinic located at Nepean Village Shopping Centre. Open Monday to Friday, 6:00 PM to midnight, and on weekends and public holidays, 3:00 PM to midnight.
- **Penrith 24 Hour Pharmacy:** Open all day every day and is located on 438 High Street, Penrith.



- **13SICK National Home Doctor:** For residents living in the lower Blue Mountains (East of Linden). Open weeknights from 6:00 PM, Saturdays from 12noon, plus all day Sundays and public holidays.

“We are proud to fund after hours healthcare services in our region to give our community alternative options to presenting at a hospital, particularly during the holiday season where emergency departments can be stretched,” said Ms Reay.

“It is important that local residents know what options are available when people are sick or injured, and where they can go when their usual doctor is closed. I encourage you to visit DoctorClosed.com.au to find out what your options are this holiday season,” she added.