17 December 2015

We don’t want to meet you at work this Christmas, but we will be here if you need us

The Christmas and New Year holiday period doesn’t have to be the ‘silly season’; be aware and take care this year!

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) operates three emergency departments (at Nambour General Hospital, Caloundra Health Service and Gympie Hospital), open 24 hours, seven days a week.

Director of Nambour emergency department, Dr Michael Natale said his emergency team saw many patients whose festive season was ruined by injury, road trauma and overindulgence.

“We don’t really want to meet you at work this festive season, but we will certainly be here if you need us,” Dr Natale said.

The Nambour Hospital emergency department has the third highest ambulance presentation rate in Queensland and is becoming busier each year.

“Our highly skilled team of doctors and nurses is committed to providing clinical excellence to all of our patients,” Dr Natale said.

Compared with only 309 presentations to the emergency departments at Nambour General Hospital, Caloundra Health Service and Gympie Hospital on an average day in 2014/15, last year there were 383 presentations on Christmas Day, 470 presentations on Boxing Day, 364 presentations on New Year’s Eve, and 444 presentations on New Year’s Day 2015.

“The most common diagnoses in our emergency departments during the Christmas-New Year period last year were gastroenteritis, chest pain, trauma/injury, intoxication and minor head injury,” Dr Natale said.

He said the figures spoke for themselves and urged people to take care over the holidays.

“The holiday period is a time to enjoy the company of family and friends. We hope that people drink responsibly, appoint a designated drive and take care of each other,” he said.

“Emergency departments are busy places and patients are attended to and treated according to how urgent their condition is. For example, patients with trauma injuries from a road accident or those with severe illnesses will take priority over more minor complaints,” he said.
Please remember:

- In an emergency call Triple Zero (000) and ask for an ambulance. Once the paramedics arrive they will decide on your care. This may include taking you to the nearest emergency department or treating you at the scene. You may be asked to see your general practitioner for any follow-up treatment.

- If it's not an emergency, call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84). Qualified staff are available 24 hours a day. They will advise you on what to do and whether you need to go to a G.P., pharmacy or an emergency department.

- G.P.s can treat many conditions you might otherwise go to an emergency department for, such as removing stitches, managing sprains and strains, and some bites and stings.

ENDS

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