Spend time with family this Christmas, not emergency department staff

“We don’t want to meet you at work this festive season, but we will be here if you need us!”

That’s the message from the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) as staff prepare for a busy holiday period in its three emergency departments.

SCHHS operates emergency departments at Nambour General Hospital, Caloundra Health Service and Gympie Hospital, all 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.

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

The daily average number of patient presentations to our three emergency departments through the 2015/16 year was 321. This compares with 330 presentations on Christmas Day 2015, 435 presentations on Boxing Day 2015, 329 on New Year’s Eve 2015 and 378 on New Year’s Day 2016 - making these four festive days very busy.

“The most common diagnoses in our emergency departments during the Christmas-New Year period last year were gastroenteritis, chest pain, urinary tract infection 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.”

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.
Media statement

- 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.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

Who: Director of Nambour Emergency Department, Dr Michael Natale and Nurse Unit Manager DEM, Cindy Roker

Where: Emergency department, Nambour General Hospital

When: 10am, Tuesday 20 December 2016

ENDS

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