

MEDIA RELEASE

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Holiday healthcare options

Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH) is urging people to choose the most appropriate healthcare option over the holiday season.

The '123, where should I be?' promotional campaign aims to remind people to stop and think about the best healthcare option for their need.

People with non-life threatening, short-term illnesses or health problems should see their GP, pharmacist, urgent care medical centre or phone Healthline on 0800 611 116.

Patients that are sick but it is not an emergency are encouraged to see their GP in the first instance.

It's free to register or enrol with a GP, and enrolled patients pay a reduced consultation fee at that practice.

Visitors to a medical centre where they're not enrolled, will pay less if they have a Community Services Card or High Use Health Card.

All children under 13 are eligible for free general practice visits, both during the day and after-hours.

If people are not able to see their GP they should go to the Urgent Medical and Injury Centre in Nelson or the Urgent Care Centre in Blenheim.

Patients can be referred from these centres for x-rays if required.

Save ED for emergencies

People should only go to a hospital Emergency Department for urgent medical emergencies.

If unsure if it is an emergency call the free, 24 hour telephone health advice service, Healthline on 0800 611 116.

What are non-urgent health problems?

Soft tissue injuries, sprained ankles, minor cuts or injuries, coughs and colds or any and minor symptoms that would be better managed by a visit to your GP, urgent medical centre or pharmacy.

For dental concerns, call your local hospital the dentist on call for acute dental needs at the weekend.

After-hours options available for people who require non-urgent medical treatment outside normal business hours can be found at www.nmdhb.govt.nz/where-should-i-be

For urgent medical attention dial 111 for an ambulance.

Senior Medical Officer at Nelson Hospital Emergency Department Dr Mark Reeves says over-indulgence, both in drugs and alcohol, often results in an unnecessary presentation at ED.

He encourages everyone to moderate their alcohol intake and says nothing gets better after three standard drinks.

“You’re as funny, as confident, as attractive and as good a musician, singer or dancer as you’re ever going to be at two to three standard drinks,” he says.

Dr Reeves says having more than three standard drinks markedly increases the chance of doing something that results in harming yourself or someone you care about either physically or psychologically.

He also reminds friends or family members not to encourage irresponsible behaviour.

Ends

Contact:

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Pharmacists on healthcare team

A community pharmacist is often able to assist with non-urgent injuries or illnesses, such as sprained ankles, sunburn, or hay fever – situations that are uncomfortable but not life-threatening.

A pharmacist can also give advice on the emergency contraception pill, emergency supplies of ongoing prescription medicines and first aid.

www.nmdhb.govt.nz/where-should-i-be has a list of pharmacy opening hours over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.