

Embargoed until 7am Tuesday 10/01/2017

The Emergency Department isn't always the best place for you - Right Place, Right Time campaign launch

New data collected by the PHN has revealed that over a quarter of respondents would call an ambulance or go to the Emergency Department if they or their child were sick or injured in a non-life threatening situation.

The survey conducted by the PHN found that 26.6 percent of people across the Sunshine Coast would consider Emergency Services as their first option when seeking medical attention.

Buderim GP, Dr Jon Harper said the numbers demonstrated that people are largely unaware of other services that can provide reliable medical advice and treatment.

"It is important to educate people about the available services which are able to provide medical advice without going to an Emergency Department," he said

"Emergency Departments are not always the best option for people presenting with non-life threatening conditions.

"If you are an otherwise healthy adult with stomach pain and diarrhoea or a sprained ankle you are likely to be better off seeing your local GP," he said.

"There are a range of services readily available to help members of the community access reliable medical advice and determine how urgently you should seek treatment."

Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN launched the Right Place, Right Time campaign today, to outline the alternatives for people in need of non-urgent health advice and treatment.

The campaign includes a new website, billboards on major roads, posters in GP clinics and Emergency Departments as well as advertising in local shopping centres.

PHN CEO, Mrs Pattie Hudson said, "This campaign is about informing the community of the reliable health resources that are available when it comes to seeking medical treatment."

"We aim to help both residents and visitors to the Sunshine Coast seek the most appropriate level of care for their needs

"Going online to find medical services in your area can save you waiting in an Emergency Department and keeps our emergency services for emergencies," she said.

"If you are concerned for either you or a loved one, you can access free medical advice 24/7 online using the Healthdirect Symptom checker or via the 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) telephone line," she said.

Mrs Hudson said that the campaign aimed to not only advise of medical advice options but to also highlight the many options open to people seeking medical treatment across the Sunshine Coast.

"Seeking effective treatment could be as simple as finding the closest general practice that's open in your area, getting advice over the phone or contacting your local after-hours home visit doctor service," she said.

Visit rightplacerrighttime.com.au to check out all your options in one place.

ENDS

About the Emergency Department and Triage

For the Queensland Hospital and Health Service guidelines on Emergency Departments and Triage categorisation visit the Queensland Government website at:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/services/emergency/>

About Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN (Primary Health Network)

The PHN is an independent not for profit organisation funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health to improve the health outcomes of the region. There are 31 PHNs throughout the country, servicing all the regions of Australia.

The Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN region begins as far south as Glasshouse Mountains and stretches north of Yeppoon; west beyond Emerald, encompassing twelve Local Government Areas (LGAs) - Banana Shire, Bundaberg Regional Council, Central Highlands Regional Council, Fraser Coast Regional Council, Gladstone Regional Council, Gympie Regional Council, Livingstone Shire, Noosa Shire, North Burnett Regional Council, Rockhampton Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Council and Woorabinda Shire.

For more information, please contact PHN Media and Relationships Officer Matt Norman on 5456 8100 or 0434 849 878