

Leave Emergency for emergencies

HEALTH Waikato physicians are asking Waikato residents to keep an eye on their health before the Christmas/New Year holiday period.

In 'silly seasons' gone by, trauma cases and those presenting from alcohol and drug-related incidents lifted the number of people presenting at Health Waikato emergency departments. However, others needed help because their GP closed down and the only place to go was an emergency department.

Waikato Hospital emergency physician Dr John Bonning said those people could avoid a long wait by planning better.

"Non-emergency presentations are not a problem for us working in emergency as we carry on seeing acutely sick and injured patients. They are however a problem for those that present with non-urgent problems, as they have to wait – sometimes many hours – before they are seen.

"If you come to ED with a

non-urgent and non-emergency condition, you will still get care; you will just have to wait for that care while we deal with more urgent cases. This can take many hours that during the holidays would be better spent relaxing with friends and family.

"You may be given advice that your health problem is better assessed elsewhere so that you have the choice as to whether to wait or not."

Dr Bonning said it was important that people with acute medical problems did not hesitate to come to ED, but those with ongoing chronic conditions such as stable asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart failure, should do their best to manage them by having a check up at their GP and getting repeat prescriptions filled to cover that period.

In December 2007, 4442 people presented at Waikato Hospital's ED, with January 2008 figures reaching 4559 – well above the

2007/08 monthly average of 4404.

"Waikato Hospital ED is always well prepared for the holiday period, and it is all hands on deck for staff; we can't have a summer shut-down" said Dr Bonning.

"Part of this management plan is our team of clinical nurse specialists who are trained to manage low-acuity or more minor patients. If you come to ED with a minor problem, these are the people who will most likely treat you."

Dr Bonning and medical officer of health Dr Felicity Dumble are Waikato District Health Board's voices of the 'Emergency for Emergencies' radio campaign asking people to keep themselves well this summer.

"My advice is to drink sensibly, never drive under the influence of alcohol and don't get into fights. Take your medication regularly, eat healthily and stay active," said Dr Bonning.



HECTIC PACE: Waikato Hospital emergency physician Dr John Bonning is urging Waikato residents to see their GP before primary care closes down over the Christmas/New Year period.



THE RED SEA: Waikato DHB staff were en masse at Hamilton's Round the Bridges event.

Leading by example in healthy living

WAIKATO District Health Board staff were hard to miss at the 64th Round the Bridges event on 16 November, with staff coming from Thames, Taumarunui, Tokoroa and the north King Country, to take part.

It is the second year the organisation has encouraged staff to get involved – last year 210 entered. This year more than 600 staff took part in the walk/run event.

Included in this year's team were board chair Jerry Rickman, chief executive Craig Climo and Health Waikato chief operating officer Jan Adams.

Healthy Eating Healthy Action (HEHA) project director Janet Hanvey, who also took part, said the option to participate in the event got an immediate response from staff.

The HEHA project sponsored the staff to enter the event and supplied them with their hard to miss red t-shirt on the day.

"It's a good event for us to sponsor because it's local, caters to a wide range of abilities and enables people to enjoy getting out and doing exercise together."

Fresh Future for Waikato children

HEALTH Waikato gratefully accepted a \$125,000 cheque for Waikato Hospital last month, from Progressive Enterprises as part of their 2008 Fresh Future fundraising appeal, for children's hospital services.

The hospital plans to spend the money on improvements to facilities and equipment in its paediatric areas.

Staff and customers of Foodtown, Woolworths, Countdown, SuperValue, FreshChoice and Dick Smith Electronics worldwide raised more than \$1 million after the appeal's launch in August.

Waikato Hospital is one of 10 hospitals throughout New Zealand benefiting from the 2008 appeal.

"Health Waikato is the hospital and health services provider arm for Waikato District Health Board; this includes the paediatric areas and we are very grateful to receive those funds," said Health Waikato chief operating officer Jan Adams.

"This year's funds will be put to good use again to help improve the experience of the children and families who use their facilities."

Waikato DHB chief executive Craig Climo also expressed thanks to Progressive Enterprises and everyone who donated to the appeal.

"It's fantastic that we receive this money to invest into improving our children's areas.

"While they make up just 21 per cent of the New Zealand population, children are 100 per cent of our future and a very worthwhile investment," he said.

Waikato Hospital's wish list includes a \$106,000 laproscopic tower and monitor used for keyhole surgery, lazy boy chairs, couches, breastfeeding chairs and oximeters.



Waikato Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is just weeks away from moving into their new building and the team is looking for some fresh faces to enjoy working in its fresh spaces.

The new NICU is shaping up to be a beautiful environment to work in, providing a lot more space and a whānau-friendly unit. Add to that a fantastic team and work flexibility, and that's the reason so many nurses travel far and wide to work at Waikato's NICU.

NICU nurses – would you like to work in a unit that offers:

- a highly supportive team environment
- considerable job satisfaction
- comprehensive orientation
- extensive learning opportunities
- flexibility with roster
- opportunities to care for sick and premature babies
- chances to work with families.

If this sounds like you, come along to our open afternoon, 12noon-2pm Thursday 18 December to get a sneak preview of Waikato Hospital's brand new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and find out why it's such a popular place to work – it could be you!