

Thursday, 9 April 2020

## Health reminders this long weekend

Ahead of the Easter long weekend, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) is prompting the community to remain mindful of physical distancing and other measures in place to manage COVID-19.

ISLHD Executive Director Medical Services, Dr Peter Jansen said patient visiting restrictions remain in place at all of our hospitals. In general wards, patients can have one visitor per day, for no more than an hour, with visiting permitted only between 11am – 12pm and 4pm – 5pm. For a full list of visiting hours across all wards, visit the [ISLHD website](#).

“We understand that it’s difficult not being with loved ones, especially over the Easter break, which is traditionally a time to come together with friends and family. However, these measures are crucial to helping reduce the risk of spreading the virus and protecting our patients, many of whom are particularly vulnerable, as well as health care staff on the frontline responding to COVID-19.

“A reminder also that you should not visit patients at all if you have a fever or flu-like symptoms, such as a sore throat or runny nose, or have been in contact in the last 14 days with anyone who has COVID-19,” said Dr Jansen.

This long weekend, the LHD is joining others across NSW in reiterating the message to stay home.

“The Illawarra and Shoalhaven include some of the most popular tourist destinations in the state and, under normal circumstances, visitors are warmly welcomed.

“However, right now, the message is clear – please stay home, don’t visit the coast or your holiday home, don’t come for the weekend or for a drive. Catch up with family and friends online or on the phone and help save lives.

“It’s encouraging that we’re seeing a reduction in the daily increase of confirmed COVID-19 cases, but we’re still seeing community transmissions and we need to maintain physical distancing and adhere to restrictions in place to keep the numbers low,” Dr Jansen said.

The community is advised that the Local Health District’s COVID-19 Assessment Clinics at Wollongong, Shellharbour and Shoalhaven Hospitals will remain open all long weekend.

“If you have symptoms, and meet the testing criteria, you can visit an Assessment Clinic without a GP referral and tests are free,” Dr Jansen said.

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### Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

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Phone: 02 4221 6862 | Afterhours: 0422 003 764 | website: [www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au)

**healthdirect** AUSTRALIA – providing expert health advice 24 hours a day to NSW residents – Tel. 1800 022 222

## **Assessment Clinics**

### **Wollongong**

- Lawson House, Wollongong Hospital
- Entry to the clinic is via the dedicated parking zone off Loftus Street, which is clearly sign posted.
- 8:30am to 5:00pm, 7 days a week.
- Phone: 4222 5078

### **Shoalhaven**

- Hospital in the Home (HITH) area, Shoalhaven Hospital
- Entry to the clinic is via the Shoalhaven Street driveway
- 8:30am to 4:30pm. 7 days a week.
- Phone: 1300 002 108

### **Shellharbour**

- Ambulatory Care Centre (ACC), Shellharbour Hospital
- Follow the signs from the Hospital entrance to the Ambulatory Care Centre carpark. There will be a drop-off zone at the carpark steps.
- 8:30am to 4:30pm, 7 days a week.
- Phone: 4295 2862

ISLHD Emergency Clinical Nurse Consultant, Professor Kate Curtis said while we are keeping visitors to health facilities to a minimum to protect both patients and staff, our Emergency Departments are open to treat seriously unwell or injured patients.

“Staying home does not extend to those needing health care. Our Emergency Departments are open 24/7 for urgent and serious illness or injury. If you need urgent medical assistance, don’t delay seeking help and please call triple zero for an Ambulance or come directly to the ED,” she said.

ISLHD Co-Director Critical Care, Dr Simon Keane added that by delaying seeking medical attention for severe illness or health issues such as heart attacks, asthma or abdominal conditions such as appendicitis, patients risk making their situations much worse.

For more information on how you can prevent the spread of COVID-19 by practising social distancing, thorough hand washing, cough etiquette and staying home see <https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>