

20 July 2017

Waitemata DHB – winter illness and an aging population

Waitemata District Health Board (DHB) is experiencing increased demand from sick patients who are requiring admission to inpatient beds and is asking patients to only present to North Shore and Waitakere hospital emergency departments in emergency situations.

Both hospitals are currently experiencing high ED demand and occupancy levels, primarily due to a wide range of medical presentations including winter illnesses.

All patients needing immediate hospital-based attention will still receive the treatment they require, but a number of conditions can be appropriately treated in non-emergency settings – therefore reserving ED for emergency-use only.

The DHB is urging people with less serious health concerns to either call Healthline 0800 611 116; visit their family doctor (GP); get advice and treatment for common minor illness from community pharmacists, or attend an Accident & Urgent Medical Clinic if after hours.

“Emergency departments are for seriously unwell patients in need of emergency care, and patients with less serious health concerns could delay treatment for patients in serious emergency situations,” Waitemata DHB acting Chief Medical Officer Dr Jonathan Christiansen

“Please think twice before presenting to either of our hospital emergency departments unless it is an emergency.”

The DHB is also urging families and friends of patients to stay away from hospital if they feel unwell, to avoid the unnecessary spread of illness to already-sick patients.

Waitemata DHB has the fastest-growing and longest-lived population nationally, with a further 100,000 people expected to live within the district over the next decade.

ENDS

**For further information contact:
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