



Media release

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Finding medical help this Easter

In the lead-up to the Easter holiday break, Tasmanians are reminded of where they can find medical help outside normal business hours and when they are away from home.

Every Easter, ambulance services are called out to situations that are not medical emergencies – often because the caller isn't sure what else to do when something urgent happens.

This Easter, Primary Health Tasmania and Ambulance Tasmania are promoting three ways to help “save 000 for saving lives”:

1. Make sure you know your regular GP's arrangements outside normal business hours, including public holidays.
2. Visit www.tasafterhours.com to help you choose the most appropriate medical care for your need and find services open near you on public holidays, at night time, and on weekends.
3. Call 1800 022 222 any time of the day or night for free health information and advice from a registered nurse.

If it's a life-threatening emergency, people should call 000 immediately.

Primary Health Tasmania's Manager – After Hours Care, Ms Meghan Mann, said it's important to know your regular GP's arrangements for after hours assistance.

“Many general practices in Tasmania provide some level of after hours care and should be your first point of call when urgent, non-emergency care is needed,” she said.

“If your GP isn't available, you can always call 1800 022 222 for free medical advice. This will take you to the national healthdirect helpline where a registered nurse can provide information and advice, and put you in touch with an on-call doctor in Tasmania if needed.”

The five most common health issues that prompt Tasmanians to call the healthdirect helpline are questions about medicines, abdominal pain, chest pain, rashes, and limb pain.

Primary Health Tasmania's Tas After Hours website (www.tasafterhours.com) uses location detection technology to determine the after hours general practice and pharmacy services that are open near you.

Accessing the website from a smartphone will automatically open an app so finding and calling for help is always at your fingertips.

A Primary Health Tasmania awareness campaign funded by the Australian Government will see after hours options advertised on TV, in newspapers, on social media and online during the Easter holiday period.

Chief Executive of Ambulance Tasmania, Neil Kirby, said paramedics and volunteer ambulance officers attended an average of 178 incidents across the state each day during the Easter holiday period last year.

“Easter is always a busy time, and all Tasmanians can help by using these three ways to save 000 for saving lives,” he said.

“If we only call triple zero in a medical emergency, paramedics can get to the most seriously ill and injured as quickly as possible.

“People who call us for routine ailments or minor injuries where other treatment options exist may delay us getting to someone whose life is at risk.”

Primary Health Tasmania works with the Tasmanian Visitor Information Network to ensure visitor centres around the state know how to help travellers with information about available local medical services.

The network’s Executive Officer, Judy Moore, said: “The after hours website is an invaluable tool for quickly identifying general practices and pharmacies for travellers on holiday.

“It’s reassuring that we can access up-to-date information to respond to these queries quickly.”

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For more information, contact:

Primary Health Tasmania – Jenny Denholm, 0418 773 233

Ambulance Tasmania – Rohan Wade, 0417 051 255

Tasmanian Visitor Information Network – Judy Moore, 0408 401 728