

**DATE:** 17/12/18

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## **24 HOUR MINOR INJURY AND ILLNESS CLINIC FOR PHILLIP ISLAND BY CHRISTMAS**

Phillip Island residents and visitors will have access to 24/7 health care for minor illnesses and injuries at Bass Coast Health's (BCH) Phillip Island Health Hub starting before Christmas.

Following the Andrews Government's commitment to have a round-the-clock service up and running in time for the peak summer period, BCH has been working with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to make this vision a reality.

The good news is that everything is on track to deliver a service on the Island by Christmas.

The Minor Injury and Illness Clinic, staffed by a doctor and a nurse, will be available 24 hours a day from the existing Phillip Island Health Hub. The service will be supported by telehealth to clinicians at the Wonthaggi Hospital and there are strong partnerships in place with Ambulance Victoria and the local GP clinic to ensure the range of healthcare services are coordinated.

While the Minor Injury and Illness Clinic will operate 24/7, serious health care needs, such as chest pain, strokes and fractures, will all continue to be treated at the Wonthaggi Hospital Emergency Department. The Minor Illness and Injury Clinic will not have access to Radiology, Pharmacy or Pathology services beyond the current opening hours of local providers. People needing these services will be transferred to Wonthaggi Hospital where extended services are available.

According to BCH CEO Jan Child, the provision of a safe service is the most important consideration. "This Minor Injury and Illness Clinic is not intended to replace the current GP service which will continue to be available. And it is certainly not an Emergency Department. Patients with serious illnesses or injuries should continue to call 000 for an Ambulance or go to the Wonthaggi Hospital".

People with serious illnesses or injuries need to have the support of hospital-grade services such as Radiology, Pathology, Pharmacy and Specialist Emergency Doctors to safely treat serious illnesses such as chest pain, difficulty breathing, pregnancy complications, fractures, sudden severe headaches, severe burns, severe abdominal pain, decreased consciousness and blurred vision.

"Patient Safety is our highest priority and we need to make sure that people understand that the best care for serious illnesses will always be provided by an accredited Emergency Department such as Wonthaggi, or by our very skilled Ambulance Victoria paramedics".

The Minor Injury and Illness Service will have a doctor and a nurse available to safely provide care for people presenting with minor ailments such as minor cuts and burns, earaches, fevers, sprains/strains,

rashes and infections. They will not be equipped to provide critical and emergency care and people should continue to use the Wonthaggi ED or call 000.

BCH is also working with builders and architects to transition a space within the Health Hub into the Urgent Care Service by early 2019. Design of the Urgent Care Service has commenced and will feature treatment areas, including a resuscitation bay. It will have the increased capacity to deliver a broader range of health care services so that Phillip Island residents and visitors can access safe and quality health care closer to home, 24 hours a day.

BCH and DHHS will commence planning for the delivery of a community hospital on the site in 2019. This will see the Hub able to deliver more services to the community over time. Updates will be provided as soon as the planning is more progressed. "In the interim, we are thrilled to be making a doctor and a nurse available to fill the current 24 hour gap and we will grow our services safely as time moves forward".

BCH is very keen for the community to keep up-to-date about the latest developments in 24/7 health care on Phillip Island and are encouraging people to join the 'Friends of the Health Hub' email list to keep up to date and receive information such as a Frequently Asked Questions information sheet to understand the Health Hub's capabilities as they increase over time.

For more information please contact email BCH Public Relations Manager at [nikki.loughran@basscoasthealth.org.au](mailto:nikki.loughran@basscoasthealth.org.au) or call 03 5671 9208.

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**Attachment:** *BCH Media Release – 24 hour health care for Phillip Island by Christmas – Photo*

**Caption:** Bass Coast Health will deliver 24 hour health care from the new Minor Injury and Illness Clinic at its Phillip Island Health Hub in Church Street, Cowes before Christmas.