

GETTING MEDICAL HELP on weekends, public holidays and at night



The Australian medical system is a complex one. If you or your family are sick, sometimes it can be difficult to know which health service to use, when you can use it and how much it will cost. This information can help you to understand a bit more about the medical system in Australia.

Please note that if you are an asylum seeker in Victoria you will receive free medical treatment at the Emergency Department. Other medical service entitlements depend on which visa you are on. They often change over time, so we encourage you to check with your case worker what is current.

If you are feeling unwell and your doctor clinic is closed

If you are unwell and you need a doctor at night, on weekends and public holidays you can use one of these free medical services

For telephone advice:

- Nurse on call on **1300 60 60 24** (in Victoria)
- After Hours GP helpline on **1800 022 222**

“ In Australia, family doctors are also called General Practitioners (GP). ”

To ask for a doctor who visits you at home:

If you have a GP, find out which service your GP uses:

Service name:  _____

Number:  _____

If you don't have a regular GP, call:

- The Home Doctor on **13 74 25** (in Victoria)

If you don't speak English, an interpreter will help you to contact one of the above services.

- 1 Call TIS National on **131 450** and ask to have an interpreter
- 2 Ask the TIS interpreter to call the service you want to speak to.

Hospital

Emergency Department

If you have a medical emergency like breathing difficulty, bleeding that does not stop, broken bones, head injuries or chest pain **call 000 for an ambulance** or go to the Emergency Department of the closest hospital to you. Be aware that sometimes it can be a very long wait.

Emergency departments are open all the time (24 hours a day, seven days a week).

When you go to the Emergency Department:

- take your Medicare Card and your Centrelink Health Care card if you have one.
- ask for an interpreter if you need one.
- ask the staff before you eat or drink.

The number **000** is free to call from any phone, whether it is a public phone, a home phone or a mobile phone that has no credit.



Ambulance

You should call an ambulance on **000** in any medical emergency.

A medical emergency is when you or another person has a serious illness or injury and needs help very quickly.

You should **NOT** call an ambulance if:

- you do not need help very quickly.
- you need transport for a health service appointment that it is not an emergency.
- you can get to the Emergency Department yourself.



Ambulance services can be REALLY expensive. You will not be charged for the use of ambulance only if:

- you have a Centrelink Health Care card.
- you have a Pensioner Concession card.
- you are a member of the ambulance.
- you have private insurance that covers it.

Everyone else will be charged and Medicare DOES NOT pay for it.

We would like to acknowledge the document 'Using health services in the ACT' produced by the ACT government which helped inform this resource.