

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

28 April 2016

### **New report finds Northern Sydney residents enjoy a healthy dose of time with their GP**

A new report released today has identified that 90% of adults living in the Northern Sydney region saw a GP in the last 12 months when they needed to, which was one of the highest attendance rates in the nation.

Maintaining good health contributes to lower illness and lower frequency of hospital emergency services, which is consistent with the report findings which also showed 12% of adults in Northern Sydney have used an Emergency Department (ED) in the last 12 months, which is under the national level of 14%.

Commenting on the report, Sydney North Health Network (SNHN), CEO Ms Lynelle Hales, said: “We are very pleased that there is a high percentage of people living in Northern Sydney whom are placing their health as a priority and seeing their GP, as needed, in order to manage their health condition or maintain good health.”

“However we are still seeing people attend ED when they could see a GP. In our region this equated to 87,596 adults going to a hospital ED, with some of these cases potentially preventable. As Sydney North Health Network is focused on improving primary care delivery, we will be working to reduce this number through better integration and connection of health services,” continued Ms Hales.

The report, from the National Health Performance Authority (NHPA) also considered where ED usage was highest in the region. Both Pittwater and Manly LGAs had higher ED attendances with Manly also showing the lowest rates of GP attendance.

However, Warringah has the highest use of after hours GP services and after hours ED. The report found chronic conditions are the key driver which led people to attend ED.

In the area of chronic conditions and coordinating care, SNHN is working with local GPs on how they could function in line with the principles of “person-centred medical homes”, which enables comprehensive, co-ordinated and integrated care to help people with chronic conditions receive the treatment they need in the right place at the right time.

The report also found that around 7% of the adult population has used a GP service after hours instead of attending an ED, which SNHN is hoping to see increase through a community awareness campaign that is currently being rolled out.

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“It’s important to understand why people are using or not using the health services in our region, and this new report reflects some of the findings from our own population health needs analysis, which is informing our commissioning of health services and health programs for our community,” concluded Ms Hales.

To view the NHPA report [CLICK HERE](#)

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**Interview Opportunities**

SNHN CEO Lynelle Hales