

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**10/12/2018**

**New after-hours medical services now available during the Christmas and New Year holidays for Cowan, Brooklyn, and Wisemans Ferry residents.**

The residents of the Cowan, Brooklyn and Wisemans Ferry areas can rest a little easier this coming Christmas and New Year knowing a new, local after-hours medical service will be available throughout the December and January holiday season. Previously, when the area's local general practices closed over the Christmas/New Year holidays, the options for residents needing after-hours medical services have been limited. This limitation also included weekends and weekday evenings.

The Australian Government's After-Hours funding agreement is enabling the Northern Sydney Primary Health Network (NSPHN), operated by Sydney North Health Network (SNHN)-a not-for-profit organisation, to commission Sydney Medical Service Co-operative Ltd<sup>1</sup> to bring the new after-hours medical services to the Cowan, Brooklyn and Wisemans Ferry communities.

The aim is to improve peoples' access to locally dedicated, affordable after-hours medical services, reducing the pressure on local Emergency Departments, freeing them up to deal with serious, life-threatening situations.

In a community consultation with Cowan, Brooklyn and Wisemans Ferry residents Sydney North Health Network found access to after-hours, general practice medical care was problematic. Locum after-hours GP services indicated these areas were too far to travel to make house visits. Also, the changing makeup of the Cowan, Brooklyn, and Wisemans Ferry's population has created further demands for after-hours medical services. An increasing number of families are choosing to settle into the area.

The option of consulting a suitable, local after-hours medical service is now here. This can provide you, or your family, with a more convenient form of medical care in the coming Christmas and New Year holiday period, or whenever local general practices may be closed. The new service will also ensure your regular GP is kept informed of any urgent care provided.

Residents now have the choice of an after-hours General Practitioner (Doctor) visit their home (Medicare bulk-billed) as well as continuing to contact Healthdirect to speak with a Registered Nurse (RN) available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 1800 022 222 \*

The following after-hours medical services now available to:

- **Cowan and Brooklyn residents**

**Bulk-billed home visiting services are available:**

Monday – Friday	6pm-12am (midnight)
Saturday	6pm-12am (midnight)
Sunday	8am-12am (midnight)

- **Wisemans Ferry Residents**

**Provision of a free medical triage call centre and if medically necessary, access to a General Practitioner (Doctor) phone consultation:**

Monday – Friday	6pm-12am (midnight)
Saturday	12pm-12am (midnight)
Sunday	8am-12am (midnight)

**In a medical emergency dial Triple Zero (000) and ask for Ambulance.**

**-ENDS-**

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

Contact - Damien Long

E: [dlong@snhn.org.au](mailto:dlong@snhn.org.au)

P: (02) 9432 8231 or Mobile: 0403 821 307

1. Sydney Medical Service - 1300 HOME GP- is not for profit Co-Operative organisation supplying Bulk Billed medical service home visits in the after-hours period.

<http://www.sydmed.com.au/>

**MORE INFORMATION**

<https://sydneynorthhealthnetwork.org.au/find-health-service/>

**About the Sydney North Health Network**

The Northern Sydney Primary Health Network, operated by the Sydney North Health Network, is one of 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) established by the Australian Government to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for the community. Our focus is on patients who are at risk of poor health outcomes and we work to improve the coordination of their care, so they receive the right care, in the right place at the right time.

**About the Sydney Medical Service Co-op**

Sydney Medical Service – 1300 HOME GP. Since our introduction in 1966, we have been operating as a not-for-profit Co-operative supplying Bulk billed home visits in the after-hour period. Our Doctors attend to patients in private homes, nursing homes, retirement villages and aged care facilities. We provide medical care to patients when the regular GP is unavailable in the after-hour period. Patients with a valid Medicare or Veterans Affairs card are Bulk billed so there are no charges for using the service.

**About Healthdirect Australia**

Healthdirect Australia was established and is jointly funded by the Australian Federal Government and the Governments of the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia. Contact a Registered Nurse (RN) at Health Direct on 1800 022 222.