

Media Release

Monday, 11 November 2024

New clinic at Fairfield expands urgent medical care access to local patients

Thousands of patients across South Western Sydney have been able to access the new level of healthcare urgent care sites across our region have been offering since December last year.

This week a fifth urgent care site, Fairfield Medicare Urgent Care Centre (UCC), has opened at Fairfield Chase Medical Centre, 49 to 61 Spencer Street, Fairfield.

Fairfield Medicare UCC joins Medicare UCC sites at Campbelltown, Liverpool and Bankstown, and the Urgent Care Service at Gregory Hills, in providing medical care for non-life threatening conditions.

Urgent care aims to complement the role of GPs by providing short-term, episodic care for acute health conditions which do not require hospital emergency department attention but can't wait for a patient's usual GP.

Sites are equipped to manage a wide range of minor illnesses and injuries, including respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses, urinary tract infections, minor fractures, lacerations and burns.

With on-site or nearby access to radiology and pathology, urgent care offers comprehensive care under one roof, providing essential services such as wound management, fracture care, intravenous therapy and more.

The Fairfield UCC is a free (bulk-billed) service delivered by ForHealth, which operates Fairfield Chase Medical Centre. It is open from 8am till late, seven days a week, including public holidays, and appointments are not required.

South Western Sydney PHN (SWSPHN) Chief Executive Officer, Dr Keith McDonald PhD, said the four urgent care sites in South Western Sydney reached an impressive milestone in August this year, having treated more than 10,000 patients.

"More than 40 per cent of those patients indicated they would have sought care at an emergency department if urgent care hadn't been available to them," he said.

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This service is supported by funding from the Australian Government through the PHN program.

South Western Sydney PHN is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting general practitioners, practice nurses and other primary health providers to deliver the best possible care for their patients. Our aim is to improve access to quality local healthcare for all residents living in the Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee LGAs. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, water and skies of South Western Sydney, the Darug, Dharawal and Gundungurra peoples, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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“These figures highlight the important role of urgent care in freeing up our busy emergency departments to focus on life threatening emergencies, while at the same time providing our community with access to high-quality and timely healthcare.”

Dr McDonald said he was pleased residents of Fairfield and surrounds could now access care for their urgent care needs without having to wait at emergency departments.

“The Fairfield Medicare UCC is another step in our work to improve healthcare access for all residents of South Western Sydney, and we look forward to working with, and supporting ForHealth to ensure the service’s success,” he said.

ForHealth NSW Director Simon Taylor-Cross said he was delighted to see the Medicare UCC open at Fairfield Chase Medical Centre, which had served the Fairfield community for more than 20 years.

He said the clinic would provide further bulk-billed access to those in the community who were unable to access a GP and currently turned to the already busy emergency departments.

“Building on the other nine Medicare UCCs operated by ForHealth across NSW, it is clear to see these services are not only popular but importantly making an impact, especially for those with young families and those needing care that is urgent but not an emergency.

“There is a significant trend of presentations arriving late afternoon through the evening in addition to high uptake across the weekends.

“Fairfield Chase Medical Centre is well positioned to deliver this new service now and into the future.”

The commissioning and establishment of the Fairfield Medicare Urgent Care Clinic involved close collaboration between SWSPHN and the Australian Government.

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