

Media Release

27 February 2008

Middlemore encourages patients to visit their GP's

Summer is almost over and most of us have enjoyed a well-earned break from work. But not everyone has put their feet up. The staff at Middlemore Hospital's Emergency Department are under pressure, trying to cope with an increasing demand for emergency services.

The hospital is currently at capacity. Dot McKeen, Service Manager at Middlemore Hospital says "this is very unusual for this time of year. It should be our quieter season before winter starts, but we have not had any down-time since winter last year."

The hospital is implementing measures to deal with the high demand on its resources, including reviewing all elective surgery for some non-critical patients. But this is only being done as a last resort.

Patients are being advised to visit their local doctor earlier rather than later as GPs can treat minor illnesses and injuries there and then and the patient may not require hospitalisation. "Often GP's can diagnose and treat the problem quickly, it will save you the wait in emergency department," says Mrs McKeen. "However, minor illnesses can become more serious if left untreated".

People are also being advised to make sure they get their flu injections coming into autumn. Vaccination reduces hospitalisation by 50 percent. Vaccinations are free for people with on-going illnesses.

People who are unsure of where to seek medical advice can contact Healthline on 0800 611 116. This free service is staffed with registered nurses who can give the best advice of how best to treat medical conditions and where the patient should go to get this treatment.

For more information please contact Lauren Young or Jenni Luyk on 378 8433.