

18 July 2022

Keeping the Southern NSW community safe this winter

Southern NSW Local Health District (SNSWLHD) is urging residents to “do their bit” to keep the community safe as COVID-19, flu and other respiratory viruses continue to circulate widely.

SNSWLHD Executive Director Medical Services, Dr Liz Mullins, said winter illnesses are placing real stress on the community and health system.

“Our hospitals are experiencing increased presentations due to the predicted winter increase in COVID-19, flu and other respiratory virus cases. It is vital people are up to date with their COVID-19 and flu vaccinations, as this will provide the best protection against severe illness,” Dr Mullins said.

“We are also asking the community to support us in our efforts to make sure those who need emergency medical care receive it as quickly as possible by saving ambulances and emergency departments for saving lives.

“If an illness or injury is not life-threatening, we encourage people to visit their GP or call Healthdirect Australia on 1800 022 222, which is a 24-hour telephone health advice line staffed by registered nurses to provide fast and simple expert advice on any health issue and what to do next.”

Everyone six months and older is recommended to get a flu vaccine. Vaccinations are available through GPs for everyone aged six months and over and are also available through pharmacies for everyone aged five and over.

The flu and COVID-19 vaccines can be given together at the same time. COVID-19 booster doses are recommended for anyone 16 years and older who had their last dose of a primary course at least three months ago.

To find your nearest COVID-19 vaccination clinic, visit nsw.gov.au.

We can help reduce the risk of COVID-19 and influenza to ourselves and others by:

- staying up to date with our vaccinations – for both flu and COVID-19
- staying home if unwell, taking a COVID-19 test and self-isolating
- wearing a mask in public indoor spaces
- getting together outdoors or in large, well-ventilated spaces with open doors and windows
- practising good hygiene by washing or sanitising our hands
- taking a rapid antigen test for COVID-19 before visiting vulnerable loved ones or going to large gatherings and events.