

Thursday 11 June, 2020

“GREAT JOB, ST GEORGE” – HOSPITAL STAFF THANK COMMUNITY

St George Hospital Emergency Department (ED) staff have thanked the local community for its support and outstanding efforts in limiting the spread of COVID-19 across the district.

While the pandemic is not over yet and residents are still urged to maintain physical distancing, practise good hand hygiene and get tested if showing symptoms, restrictions are beginning to ease.

Senior Staff Specialist Dr Peter Grant said hospital staff continue to be impressed by the community's thoughtful response to the pandemic.

“When it comes to combating COVID-19, the hospital staff and the community are most definitely all in this together,” Dr Grant said.

“From practising strict social distancing both within the Emergency Department and in the hospital grounds, to patiently lining up for screening, the community is clearly doing their part to keep all of us as well and as safe as possible.

“We've been really impressed by the understanding and good grace with which relatives and loved ones have adhered to new rules such as the single visitor policy.”

Locally, low rates of both COVID-19 and influenza suggest excellent adherence to physical distancing and hygiene measures in the community as well as at the hospital.

Dr Trevor Chan, ED Medical Director, thanked everyone in the community for their patience and understanding over the past few months.

“The patients have been very accepting of staff wearing layers of personal protective equipment, restrictions of movement within the ED and many other precautions and hygiene measures required during these unusual times,” Dr Chan said.

Melanie Lax, ED Nurse Manager, said the many gifts and thank you letters from patients and community members were greatly appreciated by the staff – but perhaps the best gift had been the good spirit and community mindedness shown by residents.

“We have such a generous local community and their recognition and support for our healthcare workers over the past few months has been overwhelming,” Ms Lax said.

Emergency Staff Specialist Dr Carla Morgan said we must remain vigilant and continue to work together in the coming months as restrictions are lifted.

“The best thing people can do is maintain physical distancing when you are out, and if you are sick please stay at home and get tested,” Dr Morgan said.

Dr Grant gave a special thank you to those patients who addressed less urgent healthcare needs by attending medical facilities other than the ED.

“By keeping our Emergency Department for emergencies, these patients helped provide a safer working environment by avoiding overcrowding and allowing staff to focus their efforts on the sicker patients,” Dr Grant said.

“Of course, if you have potentially serious symptoms such as chest pain, breathing problems, or possible stroke, you should attend the Emergency Department immediately or call an ambulance without delay. It’s safe to do so.”

While incidence of COVID-19 in Georges River, Bayside and Sutherland local government areas remains low, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) is calling for increased COVID-19 testing among people who live in these areas.

Residents who have a fever (or history of fever) or symptoms of respiratory infection such as a cough, shortness of breath, change in taste or smell or sore throat, are strongly encouraged to get assessed at one of the COVID-19 clinics in the health district or at their local GP.

The location of COVID-19 clinics can be accessed here:

<http://www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/covid-19-clinics>

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/clinics.aspx>

For more information on COVID-19 go to:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>