



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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TAKE HEALTHDIRECT ON YOUR LONG WEEKEND BREAK

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today encouraged NSW families to take an important 24-hour health advice phone number with them over the long weekend break.

Mrs Skinner today reminded parents and carers about the benefits of the *healthdirect Australia* helpline, which can be accessed by calling 1800 022 222.

“It can be very distressing when family members get sick while travelling but by calling *healthdirect Australia* you can receive health advice directly from registered nurses,” Mrs Skinner said.

“It is important to stress that if there is a health emergency, people should still call Triple Zero (000), but for other medical concerns *healthdirect Australia* is the number to call, at any time.”

Medical emergencies for Triple Zero (000) include shortness or difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, chest pain, broken bone(s), head injury, suspected heart attack or stroke, excessive blood loss or a significant motor vehicle crash or fall.

About 500,000 calls are made by NSW residents to *healthdirect Australia* annually.

“*healthdirect Australia* is already popular with NSW families while at home but it is also a valuable resource for those needing health advice while holidaying in unfamiliar areas.

“All calls to *healthdirect Australia* are answered by registered nurses, who are supported by up-to-date computer-based clinical resources, as well as an electronic directory of local services and facilities.

“And callers requiring follow up treatment are advised where and when they can seek help,” Mrs Skinner said.

Mrs Skinner said it is not uncommon for the state’s emergency departments to see patients with non-life threatening conditions such as sore feet, a toothache, inability to sleep or a minor cut, cough, cold or blocked nose.

“*healthdirect Australia* is an excellent service which reassures and supports families by giving them appropriate medical advice quickly,” Mrs Skinner said.

Calls to *healthdirect Australia* are free from landlines, but mobile phone charges may apply. Visit www.healthdirect.org.au for a range of online health information.

***** *healthdirect Australia* is not an emergency service. People with a health emergency should still ring Triple Zero (000) *****