

Emergency Department

Hours of Operation

Calvary Mater Newcastle's Emergency Department is located inside the main entry, Edith Street, Waratah and is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year and including public holidays.

The emergency department cares for 25,000 patients each year of which approximately 27% are admitted to hospital. The department provides emergency care to a full range of patients who come to the hospital in an emergency.

Our doctors and nurses see patients with medical problems and who may require surgical operations. Our department also looks after cancer patients within medical and radiation oncology, haematology, palliative care and provides support for the alcohol and drug service.

24 hour Emergency Contacts

Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill (ARAFMI)	1800 655 198
After Hours Sexual Assault Service	
John Hunter Hospital	4921 3888
Upper Hunter	1800 642 357
Carer Respite Service (24 hour emergency respite)	1800 059 059
Drug & Alcohol Services (24 hour support)	4923 2060
Homelessness Services	4923 2060
Kids Kare Line (Daily 2.45 pm to 10.45 pm)	4921 2800
Lifeline Telephone Counselling	13 1114
Mental Health Services (24 hour information service)	1800 655 085
Newcastle Youth Service - Youthline	4962 2188
Palliative Care Outreach Service (24 hour service)	4921 1211
Poisons Information Centre	13 1126

Patients requiring urgent attention will always be seen first.

Treatment in the emergency department is always based on the clinical need of the patient. Emergency departments are very busy seeing thousands of patients each year. Emergency departments treat patients in order of medical urgency, not necessarily in order of arrival. To ensure the sickest patients are seen first, a sorting mechanism called **triage** is used to categorise the patient's condition. This is performed by an experienced **triage nurse** and occurs soon after a patient's arrival.

What Happens when I arrive?

When you arrive you will be triaged which means that before you see a doctor, you will be assessed by a specially trained Registered Nurse called the Triage Nurse.

The word Triage means "to sort". The nurse will sort all patients according to the severity of their illness or injury. This will ensure that the sickest patients are treated by doctors first.

Clerical Staff

Clerical staff are responsible for registering vital information regarding your identity. They will:

- Establish your Medicare status

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- Record your contact details
- Establish contact details for your local treating doctor.
- Record contact details for your work (if it is a work related problem).

How long will I wait?

Severely ill patients are always treated first by the doctors. This can often take some time.

It is sometimes difficult to predict how long you will have to wait to be seen in the emergency department. How long you have to wait will depend on the number of more severely ill or injured people who are also waiting.

Patients not requiring immediate medical attention may have longer to wait. Our emergency department staff are always conscious of waiting times and make every attempt to keep waiting times for patients to a minimum.

Should you decide not to stay, please tell the triage nurse, located in our reception area.

What should I bring with me?

- A list of all your tablets (and doses)
- The name of your local doctor.
- Your Medicare card or passport if you are not an Australian citizen.

IMPORTANT - Don't eat or drink - Please do not eat or drink before you check with the triage nurse or your treating doctor. You may need an empty stomach before we can treat you.

Visitors

Whilst the emergency department has no restrictions on visiting times, there are restrictions on the number of people allowed to visit you at one time. Generally visitors will be limited to two at a bed. We really understand the anxiety and concern visitors may have for a sick relative or friend, however with many other sick persons and their visitors present we do need to control the numbers of people in our emergency area for safety reasons.

What if I am admitted to hospital?

If the doctor decides you need to be admitted, you will be taken to the ward as soon as possible, although you may need to wait until a bed is made available. While you are waiting to go to the ward you will still receive care and treatment in the emergency department.

A doctor or nurse will let you know when it is time to go home. Before you leave please make sure that you:

- UNDERSTAND your treatment
- KNOW when to take medication that has been prescribed for you
- ASK when you need to see your local doctor again
- ASK about a medical certificate if you need one.

Transport Home

It is your responsibility to arrange and pay for transport home. Our emergency department will help you to arrange transport home, however, patients must pay for their own transport.

Calvary Mater Newcastle emergency department is accredited by the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine for advanced training in emergency medicine.

Our safety

Our emergency department staff are there to help you. They are entitled to work without fear of assault or intimidation. With the help of the Police we will actively pursue prosecution of anyone who threatens or assaults any member of our staff or causes willfull damage to our facilities and/or equipment.