



Wudinna & District Health Services Update – 24 December 2021

At our November meeting with Eyre & Far North Local Health Network (EFNLHN) CEO, Ms Verity Paterson and Dr Susan Merrett, Executive Director of Medical Services (EFNLHN) we had discussions around models to replace our existing Doctor & Hospital services for our community going forward. However, given its complexity and the short time to assess, agree and implement a potential solution (Dr Lewis service to cease - 1 January 2022) there always needed to be a default service to deal with any immediate, essential coverage required in the interim.

Options posed in those earlier discussions were subsequently formalised for consideration and decision at our Council Meeting held 21 December. It was agreed here that the best decision for the community would be for Council to engage with EFNLHN in the immediate future while we continue to explore opportunities independently with the hope of securing another resident doctor.

The Eyre and Far North (EFNLHN) default service (pending them formally taking on the practice) would look to be as follows:

Emergency presentations to the Wudinna Hospital: will be assessed and treated by Nursing Staff. Nursing staff can seek medical advice where necessary from the Emergency Department at Port Lincoln Hospital, where the Duty Doctor can either manage the patient via phone or else conduct a video consult. Should the patient require 'hands on' medical assessment and/or admission, they will need to be transferred to Port Lincoln via Ambulance services. There can be no patients admitted into Wudinna Hospital as there will be no Doctor to care for them. EFNLH have recently appointed Merle Weetra to the position of Nurse Unit Manager at Wudinna Hospital.

The Final EFNLHN service would be as follows:

Doctor Consults: EFNLHN would be responsible for locating Locum GP services. Given the current locum shortages there are no guarantees of coverage. Current staff could be put on a casual contract initially so there is continuity of service and employment.

A further meeting is planned with EFNLHN during January 2022 to work on lease arrangements to share the Wudinna Health Centre building for provision of the Locum Services and preserve space to accommodate the potential for a resident doctor when secured. This would allow the opportunity for Council to make arrangements to pursue a resident GP for the future (from past experience this is a lengthy process for small communities), but Council recognise the value of investing in trying to secure a local GP service.

Community and Aged Care Services: will continue from the Wudinna Health Centre as normal as well as Dental Services. These services are currently provided under lease agreements with the Health Centre.

Dr Scott's support plan for community during January: Paula will continue to be employed for the month by Dr Scott to assist patients with request for medical records, medication lists etc.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THAT PEOPLE MAY HAVE:

- Q:** *What do I do if I need my regular Prescription renewed and there is no onsite Doctor for appointments?*
- A:** Help is available in the first instance via 1800 022 222 or online www.healthdirect.gov.au. Further information has been sought from the EFNLHN with no response yet provided.



Wudinna District Council

- Q:** *Who do I phone if I want to enquire if there is a doctor available in Wudinna to make an appointment with from January 1st onwards?*
- A:** Matter is being addressed by EFNLHN with contact details to be provided asap.
- Q:** *While there is no Locum Doctor at Wudinna and I need a Drs Appointment will the next closest Doctor eg Streaky Bay, Elliston, Kimba take appointments for people from our district?*
- A:** Matter is being addressed by EFNLHN with details of a preferred service to be provided asap.
- Q:** *Is there a recommended medical help line/web page that people can run a concern past to assist/decide if they require a Drs appointment?*
- A:** Yes, Help is available in the first instance via "healthdirect": 1800 022 222 or online www.healthdirect.gov.au.
- Q:** *What if I am unable to drive and have no family who can drive me to another town for a doctor's appointment – is there a service that can assist me?*
- A:** Matter is being addressed by EFNLHN with details to be provided asap.

Wudinna Pharmacy Opening Times over Christmas/January

Closed: Saturday 25th until Tuesday 28th December (inclusive)

Open: Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th December

Closed: Friday 31st December and re-opens Monday 17th January 2022

Wudinna Pharmacy is in the process of organising COVID Vaccination Boosters for early 2022. Mervat will provide an update to community later in January.

Request to Minister for Health re support of a Paramedic to Central Eyre Peninsula

To date we have had no update from our Local Member, Mr Peter Treloar on a request to the Minister for Health regarding a Paramedic being based at Wudinna to provide support to Volunteers and Hospital Staff.

How do we say thank you to Dr Scott & Family

Wudinna District Council invite all community members from across the district to attend a thank you and farewell for Scott and family during our Australia Day Celebrations at Apex Park, Wudinna on Wednesday 26th January 2022. More information to come in our lead up to Australia Day via flyers.

From Wudinna District Council Elected Members and Staff, we wish all a safe enjoyable Christmas Holiday Season.

Eleanor Scholz
MAYOR

24th December 2021

