

After Hours GP Clinic essential to Bathurst

11th December 2017 – A recently published collaborative research venture between Marathon Health and the Western Sydney University's Bathurst Rural Clinical School, found that the local after-hours services are essential for the community and significantly reduce presentations to the Bathurst Hospital Emergency Department (ED).

From December 2014 and June 2015, Marathon Health and the Bathurst Rural Clinical School conducted community and GP specific surveys in relation to presentations made to the Bathurst After Hours GP Clinic (BAHGPC). The purpose of the community surveys was to determine the reason and appropriateness of each patients visit to the clinic and their satisfaction with the services provided. Another survey sought the GPs' perception of appropriateness for patients presenting to the clinics.

A total of 215 local patient surveys were collected during the study period, with GPs completing 452 surveys. **The findings showed a significant reduction in total non-urgent presentations to the ED** occurring in the two years since the opening of the clinic compared to the two years prior.

"The findings of this research highlight the importance of relieving non-essential visits to the ED," comments Dr Jannine Bailey from Western Sydney University's Bathurst Rural Clinical School.

"The overall feedback was exceptionally positive with 99% of patients indicating they would use the services again."

The study found a 41% reduction in non-urgent ED presentations in the two years since the opening of the clinic with 8 of 10 people reporting their issues were resolved at the time of their visit to the clinic.

The Bathurst After Hours services are funded by the Western NSW Primary Health Network and Jane Blundell, Marathon Health's Manager of After Hours and Aged Care, says the publishing of the research is a credit to the service, staff and strong working relationship with the Western NSW Local Health District.

"We found that if the After Hours service wasn't available, **60% of people who presented to the clinic would have otherwise gone to the ED.**"

"These clinics have proven to be essential in reducing the burden on the ED by diverting clients to a primary care alternative. The feedback and the results are a credit to the After Hours staff."

The BAHGPC provides medical attention for patients who are seeking immediate treatment and are unable to wait to see their regular practitioner during routine opening hours. The research submission can be read [here](#).

Marathon Health gratefully acknowledges the Western NSW Primary Health Network for the funding of this service. For more information about Marathon Health and its services, go to: www.marathonhealth.com.au.

-ENDS-

About:

Marathon Health coordinates and delivers the best healthcare in country Australia. The Bathurst and Dubbo After Hours services are funded by the Western NSW Primary Health Network. The Bathurst After Hours General Practice Clinic (BAHGPC) is a walk-in clinic based at the Bathurst Base Hospital Heritage Building. The Clinic is open from 3pm to 7pm on weekends and public holidays and offers a bulk-billing service. The telephone service is available weeknights from 6pm – 8am, Saturdays from 12pm, and all day Sundays and Public Holidays. Please call 6333 2888.

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