

At this time of year - December through to February we have been experiencing extreme temperatures and the hardship which goes with it for poor families without fans or air conditioning, the homeless; the sick and the elderly.

Personally, I spent 9 hours on 2 January for a medical/surgical problem at Prince of Wales Emergency Department and waited for five and a half hours before I was seen to. There were 40 people before me. The shocking thing was that 8 ambulances were held up with their staff (these ambulances could have been required to service heart attack victims of heat or heat stroke, road accidents, or burns victims from fires.)

It appears from discussing with the Paramedical staff there (who had no chairs to sit on for their almosgt 6 hour wait) that our hospitals virtually close down at this, the hottest and most dangerous time of year health wise and accident wise, and this is to save money. People blame the doctors and surgeons saying theya re all away. Of course they are. There are very few operating theatres for them to work in which are open, their consulting rooms, for which they pay 52 weeks rent are closed - to save cleaning, security and air conditioning.

This short sighted plan will make for real disaster should a major fire happen. It is making a joke of our health system, is an insult to those who try to work in the EDs all over the country.

Please rethink the whole practice, particularly in view of the heat.

Sincerely

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