

AWCH Ward Grandparent Scheme

Hospital Ward Grandparents visit John Hunter Children's Hospital



Early in the morning on 19 March 2009, we met our dedicated ward grandparent volunteers at Central Station in Sydney for our day trip to John Hunter Children's Hospital.

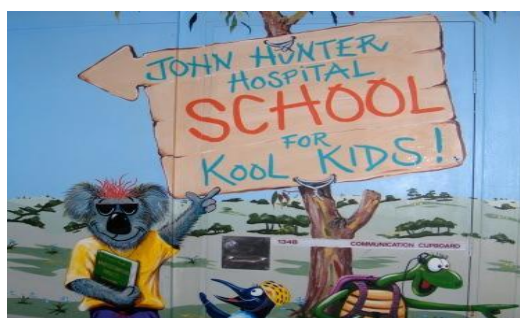
Our trip was made possible because of funding received from [2009 NSW Seniors' Week Grants Program](#). We are truly grateful to the Department of Ageing Disability and Homecare for providing us with this grant which was invaluable to the success of celebrating Seniors Week with our hospital ward grandparent volunteers.



*Jo Oliver (WGS Co-ordinator) &
David McNamara (Director of Social Work) with WGS volunteers*

The Social Work Department at Kaleidoscope hosted the meeting. We were greeted by Joanne Oliver (WGS Co-ordinator) and David McNamara (Head Social Work at Kaleidoscope), accompanied by the friendly ward grandparents of John Hunter Children's Hospital. As usual our volunteers quickly formed a rapport with each other, sharing stories and scheming of ways to get AWCH to organise more training days and excursions so they can meet other hospital ward grandparents who are too far away to come to Sydney.

Kaleidoscope prepared a very educational and interesting information session about the Hunter New England Health Services and the different areas of volunteering services offered at John Hunter. Everyone's favourite was the visit from an adorable golden retriever of The Delta Pet Partners program. We were then divided into four separate groups and were taken on a tour of the hospital grounds including the hospital school, outpatients and several children's wards.



Highlights of the tour include:-

Starlight Express Room



The Starlight Express room is a specially designed interactive room designed to brighten the lives of children in hospital. In the Starlight Room Captain Starlight reigns supreme, dazzling children with interactive games, comedy and fun. Activities and events in the Room are also broadcast live to children unable to make it to the Room.

Ronald McDonald Family Room

The Ronald McDonald Family Room is a special place where parents of sick children can go to and relax, have something to eat, do a load of washing, listen to music or take some time out to read, without having to leave the hospital complex. The Room includes sleeping facilities for parents who may need a quiet place to have a nap.

Fairy Sparkle Forest Garden

The Fairy Sparkle Forest Garden is a sanctuary for patients and staff; a place to escape the hustle and bustle of the ward and take time out in a forest wonderland. The Garden is also available to patients attending outpatient clinics.



A delicious lunch was served after the hospital tour and once again our volunteers couldn't wait to mingle and share more ideas! Alas the day has to come to an end and with extended farewells, we slowly made our way to our coach and headed back to Sydney.



The Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare (AWCH) would like to express gratitude to the Social Work Department at Kaleidoscope for hosting the meeting of the Hospital Ward Grandparent Scheme volunteers and the very friendly John Hunter Hospital Ward Grandparents who made us feel very welcome.