



behind the **BIG RED DOORS**

A note from Michelle

2020 has been the year of challenges – bushfires, floods, and COVID-19. As a community, we have faced these challenges together. As a parent, grandparent, carer or friend who is supporting a child with a serious illness these challenges can seem so small compared to what your loved one is facing. It is during these times; we strive to further our support for families using our Programs.

We continue to navigate COVID-19 and support families in our House, ensuring we provide the safest possible environment for everyone. We are working in partnership with our hospital towards re-opening our Family Room with limited operations and we look forward to providing a much-needed holiday at our Family Retreat for families as the warmer months approach.

Earlier this year, we sadly had to postpone our annual gala ball, we are excited to now have a new date locked in and we look forward to an evening of Carnival celebrations with you on the 27th March 2021. Thanks to our very generous partner, Lexus of Canberra, we have a brand new UX250h to giveaway which will be drawn at the gala ball. Tickets to the raffle can be purchased online.

Have you heard about our latest event – **the Red Wig Challenge**? Turn the page to read more and learn how you can #gothedistance to help Ronald McDonald House Charities ACT & SE NSW this October.

Your continued support through the donation of wish list items, in-kind goods and services and cash donations, all help us to continue our support of families using our programs. Your donations have a significant impact, and while you may not always see it, please know our families feel it.

Warmest regards,

Michelle McCormack
Executive Officer

Ronald McDonald House Charities ACT and South East NSW



Our Family
Room's 2019
impact



11939
visits

300+ 
Families relaxed
in our family room

Made possible thanks to the generosity of our supporters and the local community.

Go the distance this October in our new-look Red Wig Challenge!

Traditionally held on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin, the much-loved Red Wig Run has undergone an innovative makeover. Instead of a mass event, the new Red Wig Challenge will see the young and old take part in a virtual walk, run, ride or glide challenge to raise money to support families of seriously ill children.

We are aiming to raise at least **\$50,000** which will pay for almost **380 nights of accommodation** to support families staying and using our Programs at the Centenary Hospital.

Canberra's Hit104.7 Breakfast duo Ned and Josh are ambassadors for this year's exciting challenge. It's not too late to sign up - go solo, do it as a family, get a team together or challenge your workmates to get up and **#gothedistance!**

Join the Red Wig Challenge today at: <https://bit.ly/3kq7fPx>



the
RED WIG
CHALLENGE

#gothedistance

Meet first time parents Terry & Kimberly, and little Lincoln.

Kimberly and Terry cannot imagine what they would have done without the support of Ronald McDonald House Canberra during their lengthy 80-night stay after son Lincoln was born.

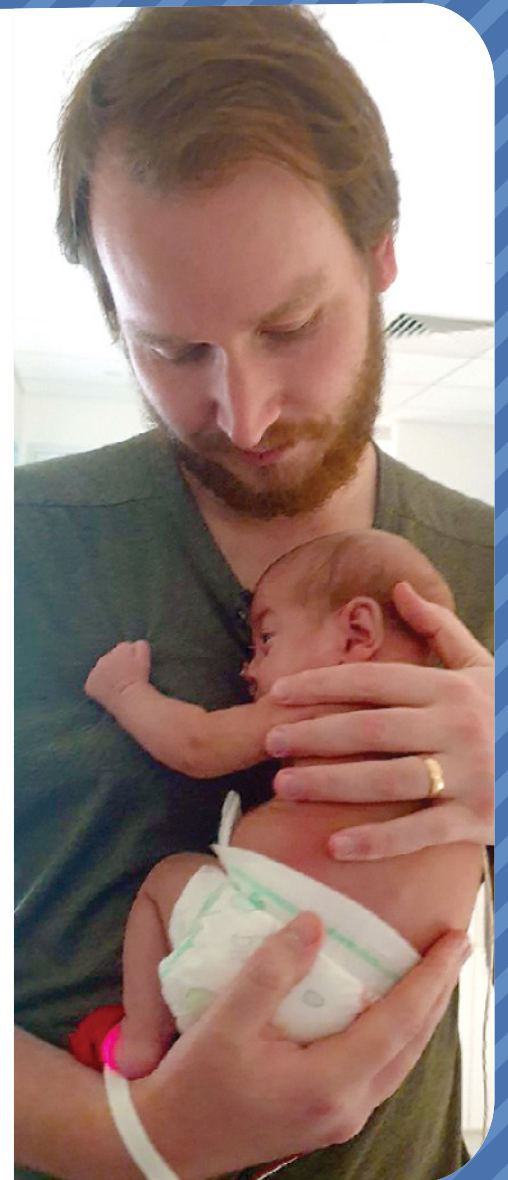
After complications with the pregnancy, Kimberley and Terry's baby Lincoln was delivered nine weeks premature and in need of constant hospital care.

"I was really looking forward to being home for my first Father's Day but if that is not to be, then being at Ronald McDonald House in Canberra with my family is the next best thing"

Being able to sleep at the House eased the burden, allowing them to see Lincoln at any time. Terry said his eyes have been opened to how much the charity does for families with seriously ill children, with all staff and volunteers welcoming them and making them feel at home.

He described the joy of being a first-time dad on Father's Day: "Watching Lincoln grow, pull faces and seeing how aware and alert he is, every day when he looks around and susses out the environment around him." Most of all, he loves seeing the joy on his wife's face when she sets her eyes on Lincoln.

Ronald McDonald House was Lincoln's first home and continues to be a home-away-from-home for families each and every day.



The Family Room

The RMHC ACT Family Room is a complimentary service for families of children undergoing treatment at the hospital.

Our Family Room is a haven for you and your family while visiting or staying with your child in the hospital. It's a place where you can step away from the ward, take a break and enjoy a hot or cold beverage, light refreshments, watch TV, enjoy a quiet space or even just take a shower. The homely space offers a break from the clinical environment where families can interact, share stories, and support one another. Friendly volunteers are on hand to engage in a comforting chat, pop on a load of washing, arrange games and activities and provide a much needed helping hand for families when they need it most.

With the Family Room temporarily closed due to COVID-19 we are reaching out to the families on the wards and delivering 'Wrapped in Love' bags to ensure they are still being supported. Read more about our Wrapped in Love program below.



Volunteer Spotlight Meet Cheryl!

Retiree Cheryl has just celebrated her fifth-anniversary volunteering with RMHC ACT and is currently making a valuable contribution to our new Wrapped in Love initiative.



Our Wrapped In Love Program

Reaching bedside families during COVID-19. In these challenging times, the stress of a sick child makes it even more impossible to navigate life. Our 'Wrapped in Love' care packages are our way of supporting parents who are on the ward who usually would have accessed our Family Room.

Our amazing volunteers visit the paediatric wards on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, handing out packages to parents as well as small gifts for their sick child to help time pass.

Wrapped in Love would not be possible without the amazing support of local Canberra company, Chemworks, their efforts do not go unnoticed.

"I was touched when, at the end of a long and painful day at the surgical wards of paediatrics, I opened the bag of goodies you left us. I was so tired and sitting at the very uncomfortable 'bed' parents have next to their children that I couldn't get myself up to refill my water bottle and was prepared to go thirsty, when I took the contents out, read the message on the tag and found a bottle of water!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO YOU, whoever you are who put my bag together. Please pass on my thanks to everybody who works on this initiative and tell them all it is worth and makes a difference to stressed and anxious parents."

- Receiver of a Wrapped In Love gift.

Why do you like volunteering?

When I retired five years ago, I thought it would be nice to give back to the community. I thought RMHC was the right charity to volunteer for.

What do you experience in a shift?

Going on to the wards and engaging with the families and children while handing out Wrapped in Love bags. I then make up the bags for the next shift.

What do you get out of volunteering?

I did not realise how appreciative people are about even the smallest things, which makes such a difference in their day. The families do not see many visitors on the ward at the moment, so they enjoy the company and a chat.

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer, please enquire today:
<https://bit.ly/3mAHKNk>

A huge thank you to our donors!



Chemworks

We could not have put together our, *Wrapped in Love* package, without the support of Chemworks. A heartfelt thank you goes out the team for their generous items that we hand out to families weekly.

You have allowed us to reach bedside families and support them during this difficult time.

Some Generous Humans

A huge thanks go out to Jami-Lee, Brenton Evans, Elizabeth Henderson, Brooke Stephenson, Danielle Mackay, Kristy Lam and many more for donating items for our recent *Wish List Wednesday*.

Because of these generous people, our once empty shelves are now stocked for the families staying with us.

Spinify Foundation

Your ongoing support will enable us to continue our vital work of keeping families close during a very difficult time.

Your support makes a difference and is appreciated by the families using our Programs. Thank you Spinify Foundation.



Have an impact in 2020 and help families stay together.

Full Name

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I would like to make a donation of

One-off donation or Regular donation of
 \$20 \$60 \$132 \$500 \$

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible

I will give my gift via:

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Cardholder Name

Signature

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