



## Media Release

# Christmas Tree Lights Help Brighten Sick Kids Lives

01 December 2023

John Hunter Children's Hospital officially launched festive celebrations this morning by turning on the lights of the huge Christmas tree.

Flipping the switch was 13-year-old Emma, one of our brave oncology patients.

Diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia in July 2022, Emma spent 160 nights in hospital, and she continues to receive chemotherapy as an outpatient.

"I was lucky enough to go home on Christmas Eve last year, and now I want to help make Christmas magical for everyone else at John Hunter Children's Hospital," Emma said.

In the spirit of spreading joy and creating magical moments, the hospital is calling on the local community to raise much-needed funds for sick and injured kids.

Matthew Frith, General Manager of John Hunter Children's Hospital, said donations will ensure every child staying in hospital receives a present on Christmas morning.

"Being in hospital during Christmas time means many of our young patients miss out on decorating their trees, heading out to look at lights and taking part in other family traditions," Matt said.

"Our team is dedicated to brightening every young face this festive season, and with the community's support, we can continue to make a lasting impact on the lives of these resilient kids.

"Every dollar donated goes to our Gift Giving Fund which brings happiness and comfort to children not only at Christmas, but throughout the year as they undergo treatment, celebrate recoveries and mark special milestones," he said.

Throughout the entire month of December, the John Hunter Children's Hospital will be transformed into a festive wonderland, filled with enchanting activities for children and their families.

The line-up of visitors includes superheroes, princesses, elves, Delta Therapy Dogs, football stars, and, of course, Santa Claus.

Fun daily activities will include Christmas craft sessions, face painting, cookie decorating, and a special present delivery, creating an atmosphere of joy and wonder for the young patients and their families.

If you would like to help make this holiday season truly magical for patients like Emma, and other young people at John Hunter Children's Hospital, **show your support by making a donation or purchasing a present from the Christmas Wishlist today.**

The following spokespeople are available for interview:

- Matthew Frith, General Manager, John Hunter Children's Hospital
- Emma, Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia patient

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