



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Innovative Perth hospital program to go national

An innovative program for adolescents developed at Princess Margaret Hospital will be rolled out across the country thanks to a new partnership between The Starlight Children's Foundation and nib foundation.

Formerly known as Club Ado, the new-look *Livewire* program was opened in Perth today as part of a \$1.5 million partnership which will also see the program implemented in an additional five major paediatric hospitals in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

*Livewire* supports young people with a serious illness or chronic health condition to make the successful transition into adulthood. The program aims to positively impact lives of hospitalised adolescents by providing opportunities for social, emotional and psychological development.

Starlight Children's Foundation CEO, Louise Baxter, said the *Livewire* program allows adolescents to find a balance in their lives that can be dominated by long periods of hospitalisation or time away from school, by promoting social connection, friendship and community.

"Seriously ill teenagers lead very different lives to others their age. Not only are they undergoing treatment for their medical condition, but they also face a number of other social and emotional challenges," Mrs Baxter said.

"This program transforms their hospitalisation and treatment into a more positive experience, helping to support their wellbeing and resilience," she added.

The program will provide hospitalised teenagers with a dedicated space of their own, including exclusive access to:

- Games room complete with pool table, juke box and computer games.
- Star Bites Café that includes a funky environment for making snacks.
- Creative Cosmos room that features painting, arts and crafts, hosted by talented artists.
- Star Studio that plays the latest DVDs, and includes facilities where patients can produce programs that are broadcast on Starlight TV.

nib foundation Chairman, Terry Lawler, said the foundation funded the rollout of *Livewire* due to its ability to positively impact the lives of many seriously ill young Australians.

"In the Perth area alone more than 6,700 adolescents are admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital annually, making programs such as *Livewire* critically important in their treatment and recovery," said Mr Lawler said.

"We are delighted to partner with Starlight to help deliver such an important program that will assist seriously ill teenagers get through what is a difficult time in their lives," he added.

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