



**Impact  
2023 - 24**



**Women's &  
Children's Hospital  
Foundation**

## A message from the CEO

Thank you for being part of a community that helps improve the health and wellbeing of women, children and families under the care of the Women's and Children's Health Network.

As CEO of the Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation (WCH Foundation), I am proud to share the difference your support makes to families across South Australia, the Northern Territory, and surrounding regions.

A year since its launch, our Cocoon Program has now seen over 100 referrals – showing a demand that has exceeded expectations. The team behind the clinic has uncovered a much greater unmet need for this cohort of babies under 12 months old with medical complexity and interaction with the Department for Child Protection. With a growing caseload, the work is far from done, and we continue striving to make care as seamless as possible for caregivers.

In a big win for childhood brain cancer, asthma, and pregnancy health research, we awarded four research grants to tackle these areas of women's and children's health in the inaugural WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program grant round. We are now supporting more than 60 researchers across South Australia, and it is our hope that they



will improve the lives of future generations by discovering better ways to prevent, treat and manage disease.

We continue to provide life-changing medical equipment and services to the Network, deliver immediate financial support to families in times of need, invite families to create special memories at our Laklinyeri Beach House, and reduce patient distress through our Arts in Health Program.

Together, we have contributed over \$4.8 million this financial year and I am delighted to have this opportunity to show you the impact of your generosity. Please know that patients and families across the Network are so grateful for the difference you are making in their lives.

On behalf of everyone you have supported, thank you.

Jane Scotcher | Chief Executive Officer

### Medical Equipment & Services



The Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) now has the latest technology in humidifiers to help patients' airways and lungs function as best they can. PICU uses humidifiers for patients who require a breathing tube and ventilator and those who require increased oxygen at high flow rates.

The humidifiers replace the function of the nose by warming and humidifying the air breathed in to maintain normal functions of the airways. There are many advantages to the new systems, including less condensation in the circuits, touch screens and more intuitive alarms.

Paediatric patients require custom-made hand splints, specifically positioned to maximise recovery and protect their hands and fingers with fractures, tendon repairs or complex hand surgery.

The Allied Health Hand Therapy clinics use heat pans to mold splints for each child. One of the two heat pans used daily to make these suddenly ceased working and couldn't be repaired. To fix this, we funded the purchase of two new splint pans. The new models have many extra benefits. They're larger, enabling larger splints for teenagers to be made more efficiently, and have improved infection control and safety features.



Provided **vital equipment & services** to over **139,000** patients who relied on the Hospital.



Over **\$4.8 million** contributed thanks to our community. **Scan to learn more.**



Arts in Health Program

Our Music for Wellness Program has now been extended into PICU, with harpist Ilona Weir performing weekly. The gentle sounds of the harp can help to provide a calmer atmosphere in a busy and stressful environment.

Studies have shown that the use of music in intensive care units can decrease anxiety in patients, and it can also help to reduce stress for families and staff. Both parents and staff have commented that the music is very soothing, and that it helps to keep them calm.



Lakinyeri Beach House



16-year-old Dilraj has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a severe type of muscular dystrophy. His family were excited to visit our Lakinyeri Beach House after hearing that it was a fully accessible holiday home – something that is a rarity for them.

The Beach House in Victor Harbor is purpose-built and medically equipped for families of children in palliative care, or with complex medical needs. The highlight of the trip for this family was being able to get away to a place that they knew was accessible enough for Dilraj to fully enjoy.



We provided creative support to 10-year-old Zoë to develop her own solo art exhibition in the Women's and Children's Hospital. Zoë is a patient under the care of the Hospital and has a huge passion for art. This support has ensured that she is seen as more than her Leukaemia diagnosis and allows her creativity and art talents to shine.

The inspiration behind this particular exhibition comes from Zoë's love and fascination for dragons. She says, "I think dragons have been helping me through my sickness because when I think about dragons, I feel stronger."

Two-year-old Mia has Tay-Sachs disease and is under the care of the Paediatric Palliative Care Service. She had the chance to stay at our Beach House and her parents, Sarah and Jacob, chose to use this opportunity to get married in the local region!

The family had a beautiful ceremony at a local park and spent the rest of the week at the Beach House, relaxing, enjoying this special time together and making treasured memories during their stay.



Reduced stress and created calmer spaces for families through **142 Music for Wellness sessions.**



**42 families created precious memories at our Lakinyeri Beach House.**

Family Support Programs

A child's hospitalisation can often be unexpected and place an incredible amount of pressure on families, with parents needing to reduce, or resign from, their means of income to be available through their child's time of need.

We work in collaboration with the Hospital's Social Work Service to identify families experiencing hardship due to the impact of their child's illness. Our Family Support Programs assist families with items such as emergency transport, accommodation, groceries, utility bills, and maintenance of medical equipment to use at home.



Helped 160 families experiencing financial hardship through our Family Support Programs.

Cocoon Program



Our Cocoon Program continues to provide coordinated care for babies under 12 months old with medical complexity and interaction with the Department for Child Protection. For many caregivers, trying to navigate the support a baby may need can be complex, but now they can be seen by a highly skilled team all in the one appointment.

Initial results have been encouraging and we continue to receive positive feedback from caregivers about how simple and seamless it has become to access the support they need.



Medical Research



Brain cancer leads to more deaths in children than any other disease, and survival is often coupled with lifelong disability. In the labs of the Women's and Children's Hospital, Professor Simon Barry and his team are focusing on immunotherapy for brain cancer, so that children may both survive, and thrive.

This revolutionary treatment is already standard for some young people with leukaemia. Key experts have established the SA Centre for Paediatric Cancer Immunotherapy, which is hoped will eventually pave the way for clinical delivery of immunotherapy here in SA.



Our 2023 WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program grant round called for projects to bring new hope to kids with brain cancer. In answer to this call, Professor Jordan Hansford and his team have been biobanking brain tumour samples, preserving them and making them accessible to researchers globally.

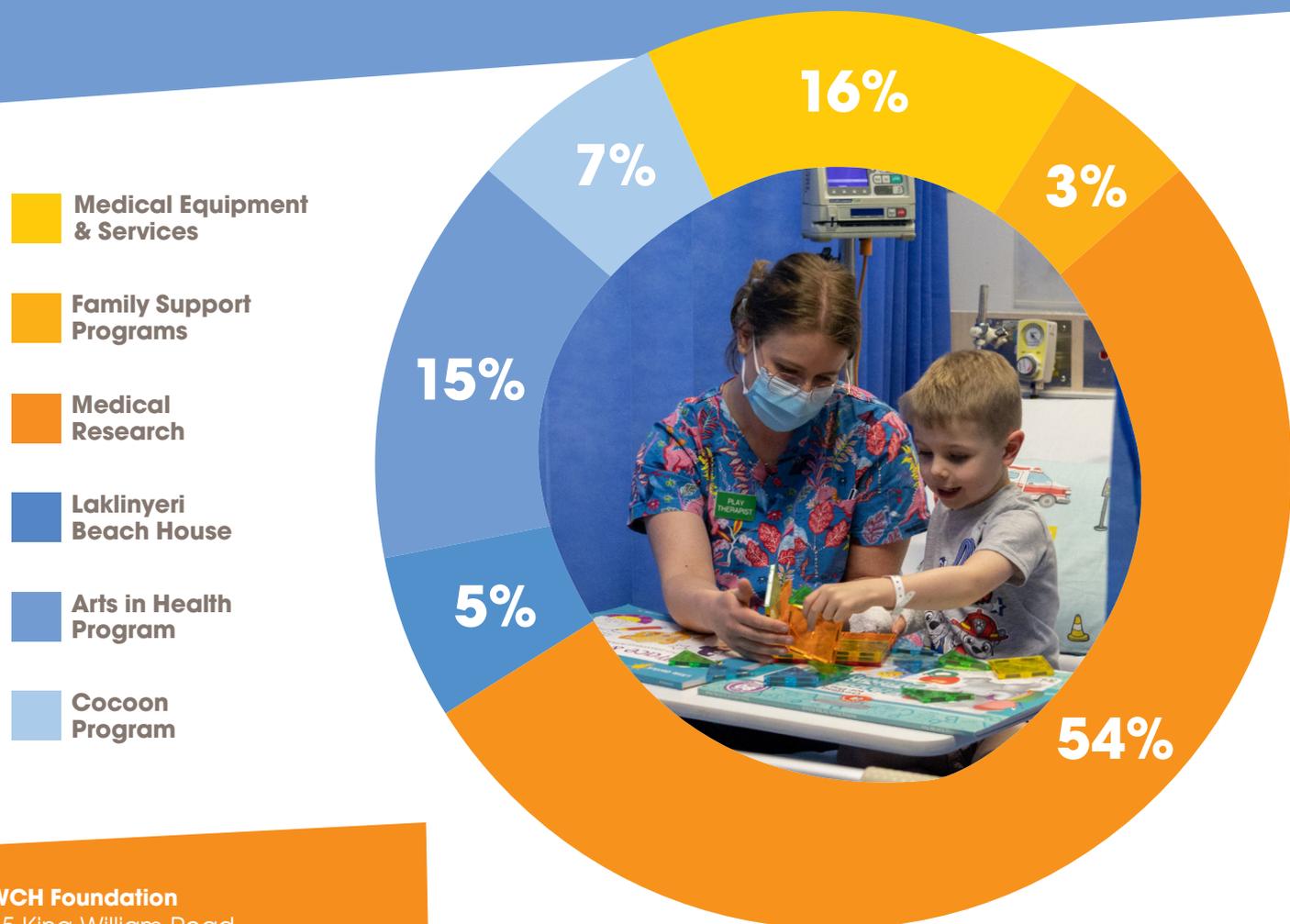
The team have started advanced investigation into the predictors of late effects in long-term survivors of paediatric brain cancer. They're using the latest technologies to learn from the samples and share the knowledge worldwide.



Invested over \$2.5 million into health and medical research in South Australia.

The Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation **improves the health and wellbeing of women, children and families** under the care of the Women's and Children's Health Network.

**We do this by investing in:**



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