



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Greater Western Sydney

2024

Impact Report



2024 Impact Highlights



1,242

families call the House home, totalling

20,323

nights of support



474 nights

longest consecutive stay by a family from 2023-2024

16 nights

average stay



49

family activities and events held through the year



49

in-house counselling sessions provided in partnership with Catholic Care



33,060

meals and snacks served



2,004

kids visited our in-house Learning Centre



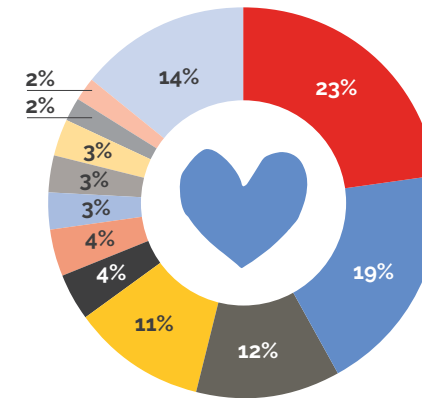
678

children stayed in-house to support their hospitalised sibling



4,802 km

longest distance travelled by a family from South Headland WA



Diagnosis of children whose families stayed at the House

- Cardiac
- Cranio facial
- Oncology
- Transplant
- Orthopaedic
- Respiratory
- Neurological
- Burns
- Gastrointestinal
- Genetic
- ENT
- Other

Nepean Hospital



1,165

families with a child on ward or in the NICU supported by our Hospitality Cart

Ronald McDonald Learning Program



113

children received learning support

Westmead Hospital



236

families visited on a Day Pass

Campbelltown Hospital



824

families supported since our Hospitality Cart launched in May 2024

Families on the Move



28

hampers of fresh fruit and vegetables delivered



Purpose

Caring for families with children who are ill or injured

Vision

A world where every family has what they need to ensure the best health outcomes for their children

Mission

We provide essential services and holistic support that removes barriers, strengthens families, and promotes healing when children need healthcare



Ronald McDonald House removed all the financial living pressures of being away from home, being a rural family. We're forever grateful that RMHC allowed our family to stay together during George's treatment, which was part of the healing and coping for our family.

Makaylie, George's mum



Message from our CEO and Board

Thanks to your generosity, Ronald McDonald House Charities Greater Western Sydney supported over 3,500 families in 2024—40% more than the previous year.

Our *Hospitality Carts* now operate five days a week at both Campbelltown and Nepean Hospitals, offering comfort and relief to nearly 2,000 families. Our *Day Pass Program* runs five days a week, supporting families of paediatric patients at The Children's Hospital at Westmead by providing them with meals and access to our facilities. Through our *Families on the Move* initiative, we are also extending assistance to longer-term families, delivering fresh produce to help ease their transition home.

These are just some of the ways your support is expanding our ability to serve families in need. 2024 marked 50 years since Ronald McDonald House Charities was founded, but the sentiment "50 years young, and our work has only just begun" drives us to grow our services and support, positively impacting more families of sick and injured children. In 2026, we will be opening our 10-room House in the new Paediatric Services Building at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. We also aim to increase the number of meals provided to families in the Westmead Hospital precinct by up to 70%.

Our services provide substantial well-being outcomes, along with significant cost savings for families and for healthcare and educational systems. We have become an integral part of the healthcare infrastructure, responding to the increasing demand for family-centred care. Your ongoing support ensures that vulnerable families receive the care and relief they need during difficult times. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to our charity and inspired by the resilience and strength of the families we serve. Thank you for being an essential part of our mission.



Claire Barber
Chief Executive Officer



Gavin Walker
Board Chair



Acknowledgment of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Ronald McDonald House Charities Greater Western Sydney respectfully acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional lands of the Burramattagal people of the Dharug Nation. We honour their enduring connection to this land, its communities, and the surrounding waterways. We recognise and respect the diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples within the families we support, as well as our employees, volunteers, and supporters. We extend our deepest respects to their Cultures and to Elders past and present. We affirm that the land we stand on has always been, and will always remain, Aboriginal land.

Embracing families with life-changing services and compassionate support

We can't take away a child's illness, but we try to take care of everything else so families can focus on their child's healthcare journey and the family unit's overall well-being.

Corporate and community partners enabled 1,242 families to receive much-needed support at our 60-room Westmead House in 2024. This support led to reduced physical, psychological, emotional, and financial stress, a lighter mental load for parents, and happier children and siblings.

Our family-centred care approach gives families the resources and support they need to be actively involved in their child's care. Research also shows that family and friend support is crucial for coping during times of trauma. Our House fosters this supportive atmosphere.

Being steps away from life-saving treatment 24 hours a day gives peace of mind, while various programs help them get through each day. This includes meals, social activities and events that provide connection and respite, along with essential services such as counselling, education, hairdressing and beyond, at no cost to families.

Jack's mum, Annabelle, describes below what this support means to their family.

“

Thank you for giving us a place to be together as a family, food on the run, dinners, special gifts, and more than anything, the love.

This place changes you. It's a core memory that has forever shaped me. You never want to have to stay here but I'm forever thankful it exists.

Annabelle, Jack's mum



In-house programs are a source of hope for kids like Lencia

Eight-year-old Lencia and her grandmother depended on our support for almost 1,000 nights while she received treatment for cancer. During this time, she celebrated two birthdays and three Christmases at the House.

Our in-house Learning Centre was a lighthouse for Lencia, where she engaged in fun and educational activities that helped distract her from pain and anxiety. Education plays a vital role in the recovery of sick and injured children, and our regular learning programs provide kids like Lencia with a sense of

normalcy and routine, mental stimulation, and promote cognitive health and overall well-being. Lencia and her grandmother also enjoyed the many family activities and events that lifted their spirits and gave them opportunities to socialise with other families. They appreciated not having to worry about mealtimes, which allowed them to focus on what mattered most: Lencia. As a small thank you, Lencia gifted us the beautiful LEGO flower bouquet seen in this photo, which she made before leaving the House.

2,004

visits to the Learning Centre

49

family activities and events delivered

33,060

meals and treats prepared

49

1:1 counselling sessions provided



Easing the transition home

For most families that leave Ronald McDonald House, their child's healthcare journey continues. The programs below are designed to offer ongoing support, ensuring families have the help they need, even after they return home.

Families on the Move

28 families received Families on the Move hampers

Feedback from families highlighted concerns about going home: exhaustion after a long drive, returning to an empty fridge, all on top of the anxiety of tending to a sick child. Families on the Move helps to ease this initial burden by sending a box of fresh produce sourced from local grocers to families after a prolonged stay at the House.

Ronald McDonald Learning Program

113 students accessed the RMLP

School-aged children who have missed school due to illness or injury (including siblings) are eligible to receive tailored educational support to help them catch up on missed education and improve self-esteem. A parent shares, *"Support from the Ronald McDonald Learning Program has been very helpful and much appreciated, given my daughter's extended stays in hospital."*

“

Guess what we had delivered this morning? A beautiful mixture of vegetables and fruit from Ronnie Mac. This gift was so well timed. Thankful to have you on our side when our boy was fighting for his life. Then to be reminded when we came home that we were being thought of... my heart is full.

Jordyn, Benjamin's mum, upon receiving a Families on the Move food hamper



Homeward Bound – helping families find their next home

In 2024, we launched Homeward Bound in partnership with Hume Housing. This innovative program provides crucial support to a small number of long-term families who face substantial barriers in securing affordable housing when leaving Ronald McDonald House.

While returning home is a positive milestone for families in our care, it can be a distressing prospect for those who don't have a house to return to. With their resources and energy focused on their child's health, parents of sick children often go through a period of having reduced means, with some having to give up work.

Each year, a small but growing number of families struggle to meet the upfront costs of securing housing, such as bonds and rent, especially when employment has been disrupted or limited. This financial strain can create a major barrier to securing stable housing, even when they are ready to transition back to independent living, presenting a serious predicament for the family.

Providing respite from financial hardship during this time, Homeward Bound enabled a family of five who had been in our care for over 474 nights

to secure a rental property in Western Sydney, one week before Christmas.

Originally from Leeton, NSW, their journey began when their son was diagnosed with a life-threatening heart condition in utero. They travelled to Westmead Children's Hospital for his birth and our House became their lifeline over the next 16 months.

Following multiple surgeries and long months of stress, their young son's condition finally stabilised. As they prepared for discharge, they decided to look for housing within Western Sydney to stay close to Westmead for ongoing treatment and check-ups.

After many exhausting and unsuccessful months applying for housing, Homeward Bound provided the financial support and guidance this family needed to secure affordable housing, bringing them much-needed relief and stability.

This new program will ensure that long-term families facing challenges with accommodation receive the support they need to get back on their feet, offering them a fresh start, as they continue their child's healthcare journey.

“

RMH was our baby's very first home where he grew, thrived, and was surrounded by love. Because of you, we were also able to find a new home for our family. Your kindness, love, and support will forever be a part of our story.

House Family supported by Homeward Bound



Your support was a haven for Matilda's family in the storm and beyond

Matilda was an energetic, sporty 8-year-old when she became unwell in 2023. Her parents learned, after many medical appointments and two weeks before her 9th birthday, that Matilda had rhabdomyosarcoma, a rare and aggressive form of cancer.

Gravely ill, Matilda was rushed from Lake Albert, NSW, to The Children's Hospital at Westmead. Her terrified family were dealing with endless unknowns, five hours away from everything familiar.

Matilda's 11-month journey was long and unimaginable, enduring countless procedures and treatments. Through it all, we stayed by Matilda and her family's side every day, providing much-needed stability and assistance, even after they returned home. As Matilda's mum, Katie, describes, this critical support has been a "saviour" for their family.

None of this would have been possible without your help, our generous donors.

“

Months of tears, fear, and anxiety around this scary journey and watching our child suffer the way she has... **this House has been a safe haven, a saviour.** Forever grateful to those who help provide such a beautiful home to families like ours.

Katie, Matilda's mum



November 2023



Matilda and her family relied on the House for home comforts, meals, community, and their day-to-day needs for 322 nights during her intensive hospital treatment



Our regular in-house activities and events provided Matilda with joy, laughter, normality, and happy moments, helping to keep her strong mentally throughout her treatments



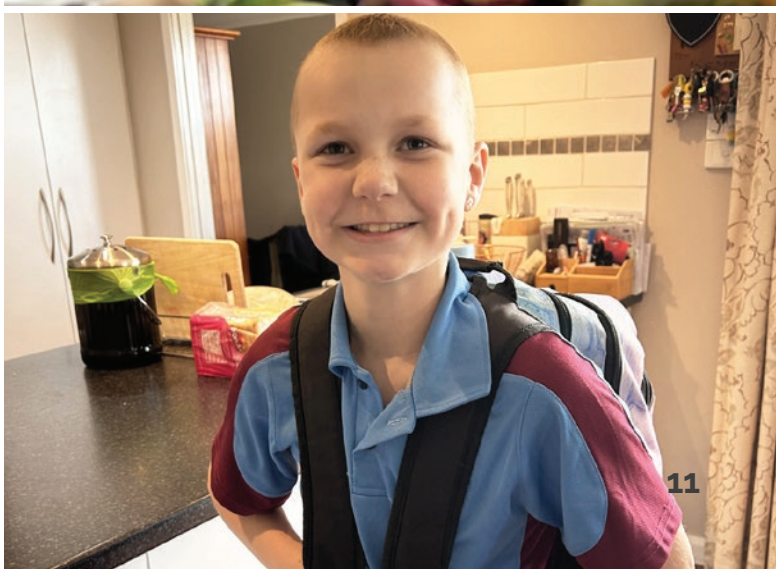
November 2024



When Matilda's family returned home, we delivered fresh produce to help her family of five ease back to the routine of home life through Families on the Move



To help Matilda settle back into school, she is receiving 1:1 tuition through our Ronald McDonald Learning Program, providing her with up to 40 hours of educational support



Supporting more families in hospital

As an essential part of the healthcare infrastructure, we expanded our support to reach more local families, thanks to our growing partnerships with local hospitals.

Day Pass Program

To give patient families of The Children's Hospital at Westmead a quiet space away from the clinical hospital environment, our Day Pass Program grants them weekday access to our ground floor facilities and support. This includes a complimentary light meal and refreshments, as well as indoor and outdoor areas for rest and play.

Hospitality Carts

Our Hospitality Carts at Nepean Hospital and Campbelltown Hospital alleviate some of the stress experienced by bedside families. Operating five days a week in the NICU and children's wards, our carts carry self-care and entertainment items given at no cost to refresh tired bodies, distract anxious minds, and lift weary spirits.



I work in both NICU and children's ward and I can tell you that it means so much to the kids and families. For those who haven't left the hospital in a few days, toiletries and a snack or a toy for a kid who's been stuck in a hospital room goes a long way.

Paediatric Nurse at Nepean Hospital



236 families availed of the Day Pass Program



1,989 families received **4,644** items from our Hospitality Carts

Growing our services to help more families in need

New House to open in 2026

Our 60-room House operates at capacity for most of the year, and our services and support are always in high demand.

Our new 10-room House is currently under construction next door, within the new Paediatric Services Building of The Children's Hospital Westmead (CHW) and is set to open in 2026. Pictured below are Board Member Ray Finn OAM and CEO Claire Barber at the construction site.

This collaboration with our long-standing partner hospital significantly increases our capacity to support families with seriously sick or injured children.

Located near the cardiac and critical care inpatient units, this new House will allow more parents and carers to stay close to their hospitalised child.

70% increase in meals to support more families

As the hospital expands to serve more families, food scarcity in the local Westmead precinct will impact an increasing number of vulnerable families in need of support. Currently, there are limited options for families to access affordable meals around the clock, adding to the stress that parents and carers are already facing while spending days or weeks at their child's bedside. These options are even more restricted during evenings, weekends, and public holidays.

Over the next 18 – 24 months, we plan to increase meal services by up to 70%, so that paediatric patient families not staying at the House can benefit from accessing stress-free nourishing meals at any time, at no cost to their family.



Over 1,000 more family members will be supported by our new House in the Hospital each year



Fostering a people-centred culture is foundational to our impact

Our team comprises around 45 employees and 200 volunteers, and fulfilling our commitment to families starts with maintaining a culture that demonstrates genuine care to all in our service. We strive to be people-centred in our operations, just as we are family-centred in our service delivery.

In 2024, we continued to prioritise the well-being and inclusivity of our workforce through robust policies. Our flexible leave options, including multicultural and Aboriginal leave policies, support employees in balancing cultural, personal, and professional responsibilities. Additionally, our Psychosocial Safety Policy ensures a focus on mental health and cultivating an environment where employees can thrive.

At the heart of our workforce strategy is a commitment to engaging and retaining the service

of diverse individuals who align with our values and mission. Staff well-being is supported through initiatives like the Sonder employee care platform, performance management with Culture Amp, and flexible leave policies. To help with work-life balance, we offer a school holiday program for staff children, allowing working parents to balance their roles and family needs.

Open communication, employee and volunteer recognition, opportunities for training and involvement in decision-making help foster a sense of belonging and ownership. In the 2024 Staff Engagement Survey, 96% of staff said they are proud to work at RMHC GWS, with one saying, *"I have never worked in a setting where I feel so part of a team and can see the positive outcomes of the work that I do."*



Governance, guided by a deep commitment to integrity

Thanks to your generosity and support, we can provide critical services to vulnerable families who need it most. But we don't take your trust lightly and are committed to ensuring every dollar you contribute is used responsibly and effectively.

Our commitment is upheld by rigorous oversight and expert guidance, which includes:

- **Safeguarding Children and Young People:** Keeping children safe is at the core of everything we do and we regularly reinforce and provide training in line with our Safeguarding Commitment Statement as outlined below.
- **Regular Oversight and Strategic Direction:** Our Board meets regularly to review our strategy and ensure we're on track to meet our goals. They're guided by policies, as well as local input from our executive team, to stay aligned with the best practices.

- **Commitment to Risk Management:** We take a proactive approach to risk management. Our Risk Committee takes an active involvement in reviewing incidents and ensures that our risk register is up to date, so we can ensure we're continually improving and staying ahead of potential challenges.
- **Financial Management:** Our Finance and Audit Committee doesn't just approve the annual budget—they also regularly review and monitor our practices to ensure that they are sound, and that we are operating to a gold standard.

We're also proud to say that diversity and equality are fundamental to our work. We have a zero gender pay gap and women represent 85% of our board and senior leadership team.

Every decision is guided by a deep commitment to integrity and making a positive difference for the families we serve. We are thankful for your trust. Together, we are making a lasting impact.

Safeguarding Commitment Statement

We keep children and young people safe in our spaces and do not tolerate any kind of abuse. Our team, including employees and volunteers, must meet high standards to ensure they prevent and report abuse. We ensure all children and young people have a safe space where we listen to them and empower them. Every day, we aim to make children and young people feel valued, protected, and heard.

Strong partnerships bring our mission to life and create lasting impact

Each individual and organisation that supports our services and programs is truly vital to our mission. Your generosity and commitment are a collective force that creates a life-changing impact for thousands of vulnerable families with sick and injured children every day, giving them the care and hope they need during some of their darkest times.



Our heartfelt thanks to

Major Partners

- FDC
- John Holland M7-M12 Integration Project
- McDonald's
- RMHC NSW Gala Ball and Committee

Supporting Partners

- CBRE
- Martin Brower
- MJH Multi
- 7News

Grant & Foundation Partners

- Cooper Tuxen Foundation
- Department of Family and Community Services
- DOOLEYS
- Edwards Lifesciences
- Guildford Leagues
- Mounties Group
- Owens & Minor Foundation
- Parkes Services and Citizens Club Co-op
- Parra Leagues
- Payce Foundation
- Perpetual Limited
- The Boleyn Foundation
- The Corio Foundation
- The Jermyn Family Foundation
- The Vertex Foundation
- Wenty Leagues

Room Sponsors

- ALDUS
- ARYZTA
- Beauvale Investments
- CBRE
- Clarendon Homes
- Cook's Plumbing Supplies
- Domaine Homes
- Edwards Lifesciences
- Fix N Flow
- Gybe Consulting
- Hands of Hope
- Matthews Folbigg Lawyers
- Medtronic
- MJH Multi
- nib foundation
- NorthConnex
- Parra Leagues
- Ray White Castle Hill
- Scendar
- The Tax Factor
- Transformer Cranes
- Wenty Leagues

Major Donors

- Ern Bickford
- Geoffrey Grimshaw
- Stephen Jermyn
- Terese Jermyn

Corporate & Community Supporters

- Accor Hotels
- AiiMS
- AJ Bristow and Sons
- Australian Diecast Expo
- Amart Furniture
- Belmonte Italian Cuisine
- Boehringer Ingelheim
- Bright Minds Academy Early Learning Centre – Abbotsbury
- Bright Print Group
- Coca-Cola EuroPacific Partners
- Coles – Eastern Creek DC
- Fan Plus
- FedEx Express Australia
- GIANTS Netball
- Giveaways.com.au
- Godolphin
- GWS GIANTS
- Harman Group
- Harvey Norman
- Independent Locksmiths
- Informa Connect
- Inghams
- IPlace Recruitment
- JCDecaux
- Keyton
- Lindt & Sprungli
- LEGO Australia
- Little Athletics NSW
- Masseur Massage Chairs

- Matrix Norwest
- Mitsubishi Electric
- Mini Masterminds Early Learning Centre
- Momento Hospitality
- Narellan Pools Hills District
- Newscorp Australia
- NSW Line Dance Ball Committee
- OMD
- Paper Playground
- Parramatta Eels
- Penrith Gaels Cultural and Sporting Club
- Philter Brewery
- QBE Insurance
- Raging Waters Sydney
- Service Heroes
- SportShedTV
- Steggles Poultry
- Sydney Zoo
- Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce
- Temp and Agnew
- Tesalate
- The Bryant Family
- The Fred Mayer Foundation
- The Seven Network
- Travelling Fit
- Venues NSW
- Waste Options
- WEM Civil
- Western Sydney Wanderers
- Zammit Ham & Bacon Curers

Ambassadors & Friends of our Charity

- Aaron Johnston
- Amy Sligar
- Ben and Zara
- Kieren Briggs
- Matilda McDonell
- Matisse Letherbarrow
- Rachel Raez
- Sarah King
- Sarah Weston
- Simon "Red Wiggle" Pryce
- Sophia Begg
- Tsehay Hawkins

Mission Delivery Partners

- The Children's Hospital at Westmead
- Campbelltown Hospital
- Nepean Hospital
- CAFAT
- Catholic Care
- Central Coast Kids in Need
- Hume Community Housing

Our 2024 Board Members

- Gavin Walker – Chair
- Kathleen Donohoe – Treasurer
- Ray Finn OAM
- Michael Dickinson
- Sandra Pengilly
- Domenic Meduri
- Bobbi Henao Urrego
- Gillian Davie
- Sharon Paz
- Ida Twist
- Safa Majidi-Sheppherd
- Amanda Nakad

and to every individual and organisation who donated funds, time, and gifts or services in kind to support the families we care for.





We would have been absolutely and completely lost without Ronald McDonald House. This House will forever be a part of our family.

To all the supporters of RMHC GWS, thank you from our whole family. Every contribution is appreciated and does not go unnoticed by our family and other families like ours.

Heidi, Tyson's mum



rmhcgws.org.au

