

Hospitals, brands, celebrities and Australians around the country rally together to cure homesickness

National fundraising initiative asks Australia to help cure the homesickness that kids in hospital feel and get them home sooner

A unique national fundraising initiative, Curing Homesickness, launches today, bringing children's hospitals and paediatric services from across Australia together to get kids home from hospital sooner.

Every year children account for one million admissions to hospitals in Australia¹ – and the number is rising^{1,2}.

A child may be there for a day, a week or even months, and they may be there for many different reasons, but there's something all kids in hospital suffer from: homesickness.

Dr. Michael Bowden, Head of Department, Psychological Medicine at Sydney Children's Hospitals Network said, "*Homesickness, or the distress of being away from home, is very real. Severe homesickness in children can lead to social and behavioural problems, anxiety and coping issues, and feelings of helplessness. Studies also show that severe homesickness symptoms only worsen in children the longer they are away from home. The cure for homesickness is home.*"

Fifty per cent of children in hospital are reported to suffer from moderate to high levels of homesickness³⁻⁵. By raising money to tackle it head on for the first time, the Curing Homesickness campaign will be helping children in hospital by ensuring the very best equipment, research and services are available to get them back home sooner.

Australian celebrities and influencers including **Nicole Kidman, Rose Byrne, Lee Lin Chin, Hamish Blake, G Flip, Mia Freedman, NRL** sports teams and a range of well-loved brands have all pledged their support and now every Australian will be invited to rally around this inspiring cause.

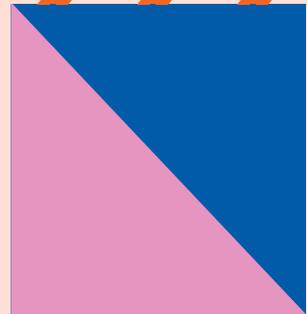
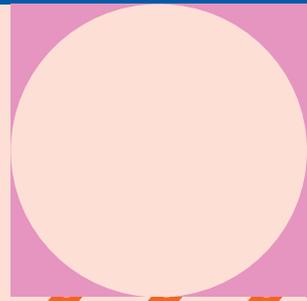
Nicola Stokes, CEO at Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation said, "*We know that kids get homesick when they are in hospital, but homesickness isn't always recognised as a serious complication or illness, and this is the first time it has been the focus of a fundraising campaign to address it.*"

"We developed the idea because our Foundation was exploring how we could make more of a difference to the emotional wellbeing of sick kids, as well as raising funds for vital equipment, ground-breaking research and excellent clinical care. When I shared our idea with colleagues at other hospital foundations across Australia, they wanted to be involved and they immediately offered to collaborate with us to deliver national impact for every child and every community."

The campaign launch will focus on a short film (<https://youtu.be/N4mBKtLaxzU>) about a young girl in hospital named Ali, who misses her mum's "Sause", as it reminds her of being at home with her family. Featuring celebrity cameos and demonstrating the power of social media, it is hoped that life will imitate art with all of Australia helping spread the message about curing homesickness.

Ms Stokes added, "*There's something about the campaign that really seems to resonate with everyone, and that's how Coles got involved. Coles is a generous and longstanding supporter of our Foundation and when we invited them to come on board, they went above and beyond! They not only created a unique product of Mum's Sause, they made sure it tasted just like mum's cooking with no added sugar and no artificial nasties and even tested it with some patients and their mums, who gave it the thumbs up!"*

Brands involved in the campaign include Coles, The Walt Disney Company Australia and New Zealand, eBay, Assembly Label, Hyundai and Pasta Pantry.





To get involved and donate online visit CuringHomesickness.org.



To watch the campaign film, visit: <https://youtu.be/N4mBKtLaxzU>

Follow our campaign



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Use the hashtag: #CuringHomesickness

Ends

References

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018. Admitted patient care 2016–17: Australian hospital statistics. Health services series no. 84. Cat. No. HSE 201. Canberra: AIHW.

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2014. Australian hospital statistics 2012–13. Health services series no. 54. Cat. no. HSE 145. Canberra: AIHW.

³ Thurber CA & Walton E. Am Acad Pediatr 2007;119(1):192.

⁴ Thurber CA et al. Children's Health Care 2007;36(1):1-28.

⁵ Stroebe M et al. Rev Gen Psychology 2015; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/gpr0000037>.

Information to Editors

Participating Foundations and Hospitals

- ACT: Canberra Hospital Foundation for the Centenary Hospital for Women & Children Hospital
- NSW: Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation for The Children's Hospital at Westmead and Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick
- QLD: The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation
- SA + NT: Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation
- TAS: Royal Hobart Hospital
- VIC: Monash Health Foundation for Monash Children's Hospital
- WA: Perth Children's Hospital Foundation

Partner Initiatives

Corporate Australia, both local and national, have come together to raise awareness of homesickness in sick children and the need for critical funding.

Coles

Coles have made 'Mum's Sause' a reality, creating a pasta sauce with a Health Star Rating of 4. Jars of Coles Mum's Sause are available to buy from today and will be stocked in more than 800 stores across Australia, 50 cents from every jar go to CuringHomesickness.org. Mum's Sause Bolognese contains no added sugar and no artificial colours.



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Disney

On Saturday 3 August, Disney will screen Marvel Studios The Avengers Endgame and Infinity War and will donate 100% of ticket sales.

Screenings will be held in selected cinemas across Australia.

Locations include:

- NSW: Event Cinemas George Street
- QLD: Event Cinemas Chermside
- SA: Event Cinemas Marion
- WA: Event Cinemas Innaloo
- VIC: Village Cinemas Jam Factory

Assembly Label

Assembly Label has released an exclusive and limited-edition range of t-shirts for men, women and children available in-store and online, with 100% of t-shirt sales going towards Curing Homesickness.

Pasta Pantry

Pasta Pantry's Sydney stores are raising awareness and donating funds from the sale of their flagship pasta and lasagne dishes in support of the Curing Homesickness initiative.

How donations will benefit homesick kids in hospital

Designed and coordinated by Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation, this unique new campaign unites children's hospitals across Australia in the mission to cure homesickness so kids can get back home sooner.

A child may be there for a day, a week or even months, and they may be there for many different reasons, but there's something all kids in hospital suffer from: homesickness.

Home is the cure for homesickness.

Donations will go towards helping kids in hospital get back home, where they belong, by investing in ground-breaking research, state-of-the-art technology, and the amazing doctors, nurses and allied health professionals who deliver the care children need.

Funds will be also used to cure homesickness by making kids feel more at home during their hospital stay, developing services to connect kids to home and improve the emotional wellbeing of kids in hospital.

Make a difference to sick children's lives by donating online at CuringHomesickness.org.

About Assembly Label

Assembly Label was born from a desire to create well-made products that embody the relaxed, Australian coastal lifestyle. Reflecting an appreciation for minimalist design, our collections are clean and considered, favouring high-quality materials and refined detail over adornment.

Established in 2011 by cofounders Damien Horan and Daniel Oliver, Assembly Label was created to provide purposeful wardrobe essentials for men and women. Through carefully curated design principles with a minimalist influence, each and every touch point of the Assembly Label brand reflects a simplified approach to clothing and lifestyle pieces for coastal living.



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About The Walt Disney Company

The mission of The Walt Disney Company is to entertain, inform and inspire people around the globe through the power of unparalleled storytelling, reflecting the iconic brands, creative minds and innovative technologies that make ours the world's premier entertainment company.

The Walt Disney Company, together with its subsidiaries, is a diversified worldwide entertainment company with operations in four business segments: Media Networks, Studio Entertainment, Direct-to-Consumer and International; and Disney Parks, Experiences and Products. The Walt Disney Company has been active in Australia since 1988 and in 1992, the first office officially opened. There are now two offices in the region – in Melbourne and Sydney – that employ more than 270 permanent staff. Today, The Walt Disney Company is one of the most active and largest foreign entertainment companies in Australia with diversified business in consumer products, publishing, mobile content, television and family entertainment programs. For more information about The Walt Disney Company please visit: <http://corporate.disney.go.com/>

About Pasta Pantry

From its humble beginnings as a single store in Rose Bay in 1992, Pasta Pantry's dedicated team and loyal customers have helped them grow into a bustling family business with 9 retail stores. With a team of passionate chefs, they make great tasting recipes on a daily basis to sell in their stores across Sydney.

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