



ALH Christmas Appeal – Helping kids in hospital this Christmas

The most precious gifts don't often come neatly wrapped – through special moments and memories, the Children's Hospital Foundation helps make hospital feel more like home for families.

With your teams support, Christmas can still be the season for hopes, dreams and even miracles for kids in hospital. Kids like your Christmas Appeal Ambassador Raf.

The funds raised during the ALH Christmas appeal helps the Children's Hospital Foundation to fund special moments like a family photo with Santa, a response to their letter from the North Pole or a gift on Christmas morning like the 4,000 received in 2022. In addition, it will also help fund new therapies like immunotherapy and supporting ground breaking research, the Children's Hospital Foundation can help get kids home for Christmas.



Raf's story

Nine-year-old Raf was a vibrant and happy kid living on his family's property in northern New South Wales when he was diagnosed with stage 4 neuroblastoma in October 2021 – an aggressive form of cancer found in the adrenal glands.

His family's life was immediately turned upside down upon his diagnosis. Raf and his mum, Nat, relocated to Brisbane for immediate treatment at the Queensland Children's Hospital – leaving his dad, Mick, and little brother, Sam, behind at home. Separated across state borders remained their family's reality for the first four months of Raf's treatment.

“Raf and Sam were best friends. Sam lost us overnight and when he got us back four months later, Raf was a shell of what he'd been.”

– Natalie, Raf's mum

Raf's faced a long and hard journey since his diagnosis – he lost his hair, was isolated to his room due to his compromised immune system for most of 2021 and 2022. On some days, Raf could barely muster a smile.

His treatment has included chemotherapy and radiation, surgeries, stem cell harvests and transplants and a type of immunotherapy medication, Dinutuximab.

If it was not for his immunotherapy medication, Raf may not have achieved the same outcomes that he has today. After 21 months, he recently received a successful remission outcome and finished his last round of treatment.

Thanks to the promise of immunotherapy, kids like Raf can have hope for a better future.

Since the Ian Frazer Centre for Children's Immunotherapy Research's launch in August last year, your generosity is helping fund important research to change the way children like Raf are treated for cancer.

“Immunotherapy is a lifeline for kids with high-risk neuroblastoma like Raf. It's buying time to try and find a cure so that they don't continue to relapse or, worse, not survive.”

– Natalie, Raf's mum

Led by the team at The University of Queensland, researchers are progressing key projects to harness the power of immunotherapy.

The projects have enormous potential to give children with cancer the best possible chance at survival and survivorship through reducing the burden of their treatment and increasing the body's natural immunity to detect and kill damaged cells.

With your help, children with cancer – like Raf – and their families can have every chance at life this Christmas.



Scan the QR code to find out more about the ALH Christmas Appeal and how your venue can get behind the appeal.

Thank you ALH Group, for being the difference every kid deserves.