

Thursday, 5 April 2018

Newcastle Permanent staff salary donations fund cuddle cot to support grieving families

Today Newcastle Permanent Building Society and Bears of Hope, an organisation that supports and cares for families who experience the loss of a child, through pregnancy or during infancy, donated a 'cuddle cot' to Muswellbrook, Singleton, and Scone Hospitals.

A cuddle cot is a support resource for bereaved parents who have experienced the loss of an infant. The cot, which is fitted with an insulated cold blanket, acts like a refrigerated bassinet, and allows babies who have passed away to stay in the room with their family, rather than in a morgue.

The donation of the cuddle cot was made possible through a \$15,500 donation provided to Bears of Hope by the Newcastle Permanent Staff Community Assist Program—an elective program where staff donate money for charity directly from their fortnightly salaries. Participating staff nominate and vote on the charities that will be the beneficiaries of the donated funds. Each year four charities are recipients of the donated funds, given in two donation rounds.

Bears of Hope has used part of the donation to purchase the cuddle cot which will be used as a shared resource at Muswellbrook, Singleton, and Scone Hospitals.

Wendy Hordern, Health Service Manager of Muswellbrook Hospital said they were grateful for the donation from Bears of Hope and Newcastle Permanent.

“Our staff understand the gravity of the loss of a baby for parents.

“The donation of this cuddle cot will provide grieving Upper Hunter families with the opportunity to spend more time with their baby to say goodbye,” Wendy said.

Toni Watson, Vice President and Co-Founder of Bears of Hope said that every year in Australia thousands of parents experience the loss of their precious baby. “The donation by Newcastle Permanent staff will support some of these families through the hardest time of their life.

“The donation of this cuddle cot today will provide grieving Upper Hunter families with uninterrupted time with their beautiful baby, allowing precious memories to be created that will stay with families forever.

“I cannot express my gratitude enough to the staff of Newcastle Permanent for their generosity and support of the work of Bears of Hope,” Toni said.

Kerry Dunn, Mobile Lending Manager for Newcastle Permanent said that it was humbling to see the positive impact the Community Assist program could make to the local community.

“To see the impact our small fortnightly donation to the Staff Salary Donation program can make to our community—to grieving families—it makes it all worthwhile. To be able to help a family during what I can only imagine would be one of the most difficult times in their lives, well, it's a pleasure that we can help in a small way.”

In addition to the purchase of the cuddle cot, Bears of Hope also used the funds to support 140 families with a Bear of Hope support resources, instantly connecting parent with support, comfort, information, and guidance through creating memories with their baby before they leave hospital. The donation also has enabled counselling and a grief workshop to be offered to parents free of charge.

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