

Monday 12 September 2022

## **LISMORE REGION CANCER PATIENTS TRAVELLING IN SAFETY AND STYLE – AND ACCESSING MUCH-NEEDED FLOOD RELIEF – WITH NEW TRANSPORT TO TREATMENT VEHICLE**

Cancer patients in the Lismore region are travelling to and from treatment in comfort and style, thanks to Cancer Council NSW purchasing a brand new vehicle, made possible by a grant of more than \$30,000 from Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation.

A hybrid Toyota RAV4, the vehicle has been in operation for a little over two months and has already accrued some impressive stats.

“There was a pressing need for this vehicle and so we’re glad to see it’s been put straight to use,” said Jennifer Leslie, Chair of Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation.

“Already the RAV4 has completed 48 trips, travelling over 2,700 kilometres to transport eight patients to receive their cancer treatment.

“Of course, none of these trips would have been possible without the tireless volunteer drivers, who have already completed 88 hours behind the wheel. We’re so grateful for all they do!”

Caitlyn Feldmann, Cancer Council NSW Community Lead for Northern NSW, said that in the wake of the devastating floods in the region, the vehicle had been put to use beyond its usual role.

“With the recent flooding in Northern NSW, many people affected by cancer lost their homes, cars and belongings,” said Ms Feldmann.

“With the car donated by Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation, we were able to support people affected by cancer not only get to and from treatment but also to get to the Lismore showgrounds to collect clothes and essentials.

“This provided people with additional support whilst undergoing treatment for cancer.”

Volunteer driver Jodi Woodward said having a new, safe and reliable vehicle for volunteers to use added an extra layer of security for the drivers on roads that require a steady hand.

“The roads have been badly affected by the floods in Lismore. It is so reassuring to have a safe and reliable car during this time,” said Ms Woodward.

“We transported a husband and wife, both affected by cancer, from their daughter’s home in Alstonville to their treatments in Lismore.

“Their home and belongings had been badly damaged by floods and they had nothing. We were able to drive them to the showgrounds to collect clothes and essentials whilst taking them back from their treatments.

“It was great having the car donated by Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation available for us to use in the best way possible in these circumstances.”

Ms Feldmann said Transport to Treatment was a critical service in rural and remote communities.

“Travelling to and from medical appointments is difficult for many people affected by cancer and treatment usually occurs over an extended period of time,” said Ms Feldmann.

“Cancer Council NSW’s Transport to Treatment is a free service set up to help get cancer patients in regional NSW to and from their treatment.”

Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation has provided grants totalling more than \$550,000 to Cancer Council NSW in a proud association dating back to 2005, with almost \$450,000 going to the Transport to Treatment program.

Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation distributes around \$1.5 million in grants each year to facilitate charitable projects that make a difference to improving local communities throughout the Hunter, Central West, Central Coast, New England, Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers regions of NSW.

Members of the public are able to gain access to Transport to Treatment by contacting Cancer Council’s Information and Support Service on 13 11 20.