

# Media Release

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**Wednesday, 31 August 2022**

## **COLES LAUNCHES APPEAL TO SUPPORT MEDICAL CARE FOR LOCAL KIDS**

Local residents in the Hunter New England region can support families experiencing the heartache of childhood illness through a new fundraising appeal which begins at Coles today.

From Wednesday 31 August to Tuesday 20 September, Coles will sell \$2 donation cards at 51 Coles stores in the Hunter Newcastle region to raise funds for the John Hunter Children's Hospital in Newcastle and its regional paediatric services at Tamworth and Taree.

Funds will support the John Hunter Children's Hospital Community Service, HNEKidsRehab, and be directly allocated to the local area in which they were raised.

HNEKidsRehab provides specialist paediatric rehabilitation care for children and young people living with a range of disabilities resulting from injury, illness or disease. This includes acquired conditions such as acquired brain injury, spinal cord injury and disease, and congenital conditions, including cerebral palsy and spina bifida.

HNEKidsRehab supports kids like Addy who has cerebral palsy and needs regular treatment. Residing in Gunnedah, Addy and her family were required to drive 4-hours to Newcastle to access services.

"Driving frequently with a baby needing constant breaks - and crying from leg spasms and car sickness was very difficult. My husband and I had to take days off work and pull Addy's brothers out of school just for a simple day procedure. But when you live in a rural area and your child has additional needs, you don't have an option," said Alicia, Addy's mum.

The funds raised at Coles this September will allow HNEkidsRehab to run an additional two clinics in Taree and Tamworth, enabling children like Addy to receive care much closer to home and not have to travel to Newcastle for appointments.

"Tamworth is a 45-minute drive which means I can go for an appointment in the morning and get home after lunch. My boys can go to school, it is a day off work for my husband as opposed to a week, and we can sleep in our own bed the same night. We aren't exhausted, Addy is happy and stress-free, and it's all over in one day," said Alicia.

John Hunter Children's Hospital Executive Director Dr Paul Craven thanked Coles' customers for their donations which will support regional care for patients like Addy.

"The money raised by Coles stores will go directly towards the paediatric departments in their local area, so all money raised in Taree and Tamworth will support outreach services in these towns," he said.

"Our partnership with Coles has grown from strength to strength over the past two years. Through the support from Coles' customers and team members in the Hunter New England region, we can help to change the lives of sick children."

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"As a result of the funds raised last year, we were able to purchase a brand-new Echo Machine, which allows our paediatric cardiologists to offer diagnostics both antenatally and during childhood."

Coles NSW/ACT Assistant State Manager Mark Dubock encouraged local shoppers to support the campaign to help the many families impacted by childhood illness.

"Coles is pleased to continue our support of the John Hunter Children's Hospital to raise vital funds for families such as Addy's," he said.

"The appeal is a worthy cause and close to our team members' hearts. I encourage our customers to get involved by purchasing a donation card at the checkout and benefit their local community."

## Background information:

John Hunter Children's Hospital is a specialised tertiary referral paediatric hospital in Newcastle, providing complex medical, surgical, major trauma and neonatal services for the Hunter New England Local Health District.

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**For further information, please contact**

Coles Media Line (03) 9829 5250 or [media.relations@coles.com.au](mailto:media.relations@coles.com.au)

## Coles stores supporting John Hunter Children's Hospital and regional services:

Waratah	Cessnock	Forster	Inverell	Swansea
Newcastle Junction	Green Hills	Taree	Moree	Belmont
Wallsend	Scone	Old Bar	Gunnedah	Toronto
Kotara	Fletcher	South West Rocks	Glen Innes	Edgeworth
Tanilba Bay	Singleton	Kempsey	Tenterfield	Warners Bay
Marketown	Rutherford	Lighthouse Beach	Tamworth South	Glendale
Tea Gardens	Kurri Kurri	Lake Innes	Armidale	Morisset
Mayfield	Thornton	Laurieton	Tamworth	Charlestown
Lake Macquarie	Muswellbrook	Port Macquarie	Narrabri	Jewelstown
Medowie	Huntlee	Wingham	Tamworth	Bonnells Bay
Salamander Bay				