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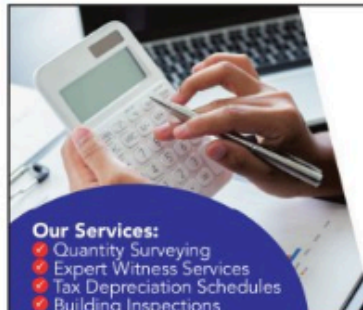
\$3.50 INC GST

Weekend Liberal

TRUSTED VOICE OF DUBBO
AND THE ORANA REGION

Home away from home

Macquarie Home Stay provides comfort, connection, and community for patients and their families visiting Dubbo for medical appointments and treatment. The Slacksmith family (pictured) is nearing the end of a nine-week stint at Macquarie Home Stay, after the safe delivery of beautiful twin boys at Dubbo Hospital. Read more in our special eight-page wraparound.



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Piece of the regional healthcare puzzle

Macquarie Home Stay exists to support patients who travel to Dubbo to receive medical treatment and care

Rod Crowfoot, Managing Director at Macquarie Home Stay

CAN you imagine trying to navigate a high-risk pregnancy and needing to travel to be close to birthing facilities many weeks or months prior to your due date?

Or perhaps you're a cancer patient receiving radiotherapy and need treatment every day for 15 minutes over a period of six weeks and you come from Bourke.

What if one of your family members has been admitted to intensive care needing surgery and rehabilitation over a period of time and you've just arrived from Lightning Ridge to be by their side and sometimes to even say your last goodbyes?

There are truly so many scenarios which unfortunately affect families right across the western and far western regions of NSW. That's where Macquarie Home Stay (MHS) becomes your "Home away from home."

Patients from across NSW are frequently referred to major regional centres for specialist medical treatment.

Dubbo, as a major health hub to the region, draws considerable numbers of patients for treatment and, in doing so, patients, their carer and family require appropriate, affordable, short-term accommodation close to hospitals. That's the niche that MHS sits in.

MHS is a jigsaw piece in the puzzle of regional healthcare. The facility is key in supporting NSW health to deliver medical services, connect patients with treatment, and build healthier, stronger and thriving regional communities.

The MHS patient accommodation supports people accessing a wide range of services from paediatrics, cancer care, obstetrics and emergency surgery, to specialist appointments and more.

With the funding provided to build the Western Cancer Centre (WCC), it quickly became apparent that MHS would need to expand to support patients receiving treatment. In consultation with WCC, 26 units were needed for patients who travel for their treatment.

The CWA of NSW, passionate grassroots community members, supported MHS's vision and, along with their Sydney leadership team, provided substantial donations to expand the accommodation facility.

Sponsorship across all areas of the proposed building were created - each unit and common areas inside and out were

funded by businesses, community, families and others to see the vision realised.

Combined with a grant from the NSW Government, it enabled the first guests to occupy the new CWA of NSW Guesthouse in February 2025.

Speaking of grassroots, we spoke with Tim Williams, Nurse Unit Manager of Western Cancer Centre in Dubbo. "Home away from home comes to mind when someone mentions Macquarie Home Stay. That's what it becomes for many people from out west," Mr Williams said.

"Whether they have support from loved ones or not, MHS caters for the needs of the well, not so well and the could be better, giving them a refuge amid the trials of life, likening it to a supportive community family when isolated from their own."

"I have seen the way that the staff of

Home away from home comes to mind when someone mentions Macquarie Home Stay. That's what it becomes for many people from out west.

Tim Williams, Nurse Unit Manager, Western Cancer Centre Dubbo

Macquarie Home Stay do their best to meet the immediate and long-term needs of clients, from arranging transport to town, to seeing the need of rearranging appoint-

ments within the cancer centre to suit their individual requirements.

"Being able to be connected into a community that is not your own is vitally important for those who stay. Linking to a chemist, bank or grocery store allows clients to maintain that independence and sense of control when a cancer diagnosis seems to take most of that away," Mr Williams said.

And so, the journey of Macquarie Home Stay continues. As Dubbo increasingly becomes the drawcard for medical care for the far-reaching communities of NSW, MHS will continue to meet patient accommodation needs. Call it magic or plain and simple help, where help is needed the most. That's MHS - supporting, caring and helping people so they can soon return to their regional communities and be with family and friends once more.



Macquarie Home Stay, just 800 metres from Dubbo Hospital, now operates 51 units of patient and family accommodation. The first guests occupied the new CWA of NSW Guesthouse in February 2025. Picture supplied



Coonabarabran woman, Mary Wainwright (pictured), has travelled to Dubbo for oncology and chemotherapy appointments and, more recently, for surgery. Picture supplied

Accommodation with a big heart

IN 2024-25 close to 4500 people stayed at Macquarie Home Stay (MHS), with future predictions suggesting that close to 10,000 people each year will need accommodation support at MHS while undergoing medical appointments and treatment.

Since 2019, MHS has been providing patient accommodation to many of the western and far western people of NSW. Guests travel from over 50 per cent of the geographical area of NSW to Dubbo for medical treatment. Thanks to MHS, they now have a place to stay where the cost of their accommodation isn't the reason they delay obtaining the medical care they need.

Some people stay over-

night, a couple of days, a week or for months and months. The longest stay at MHS this year was 112 nights and the longest distance travelled was 772 kilometres one way. But MHS is much more than just a place to stay, it's really a home away from home which happens to offer accommodation for patients and their families with some "special sauce", as Rod Crowfoot, Managing Director of MHS, explains.

"Our special sauce is made up of a number of elements including the caring and attentive staff who make sure all our guests have everything they need," Mr Crowfoot said. "Volunteer groups provide delicious dinners for our guests free of

The accommodation, amenities, staff and transport facilities were first class and of a standard that met each and every need I could ask for.

Mary Wainwright, guest at Macquarie Home Stay

charge twice weekly, comfy rooms with generously donated hand-crafted rugs and even beautiful patchwork quilts for guests to use and enjoy. We check in with guests, some may be unwell or having treatment and others are the carer or partner of the patient who is in hospital. We provide a guest concierge service, with volunteers who drop off and pick up

patients from hospital or to and from appointments, this also is free of charge thanks to the generosity of Dubbo City Toyota.

The impact of MHS is significant. Before the Western Cancer Centre at Dubbo Hospital and Macquarie Home Stay existed, and oncology treatment could only be undertaken in cities and metropolitan areas far away

from family, friends and familiar environments, many patients would sadly choose to stay at home and not seek medical treatment at all.

Over the past few months, Coonabarabran woman, Mary Wainwright has travelled to Dubbo for oncology and chemotherapy appointments and, more recently, for surgery. Mary chooses to stay at MHS.

"At a time of uncertainty in my diagnosis of breast cancer, the ability to stay at MHS in Dubbo, so as to attend various appointments and weekly chemotherapy over a prolonged 12 to 15-week period, was a great relief," Mrs Wainwright said.

"The accommodation, amenities, staff and trans-

port facilities were first class and of a standard that met each and every need I could ask for. The volunteer network that provided meals during the week were a credit to those organisations and the people that participate in providing a service to those like me that appreciated a home-cooked meal, friendly faces and support.

"To everyone associated with MHS, from those that volunteer their time, to those employed in areas from maintenance, gardens, administration staff and management, a big, big thank you and my sincere appreciation to you all."

These stories are echoed across a broad spectrum of people who stay at MHS.



At Lyons Project Management, we're incredibly proud to have partnered with the dedicated team at Macquarie Home Stay to bring this important community project to life.

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This wasn't just another project to manage - it was about creating a safe, welcoming space for families who need to be close to medical care during some of life's toughest moments. Working closely with the Home Stay team, we turned a vision into reality, and seeing the positive impact on the Dubbo community reminds us why we do what we do. Here's to great partnerships and projects that truly make a difference!



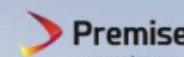
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Here at Premise, we are proud to have been involved since 2015 in such an important community project in Macquarie Home Stay. Our team delivered Architecture, Civil Engineering, Survey, Town Planning, and Services Engineering Coordination to help bring this vision to life.

Seeing the positive impact Macquarie Home Stay has on families and the wider community reinforces just how meaningful this work is, and we are honoured to have played a part in creating a place that will continue to support people for years to come.

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Premise Dubbo and Orange provides Architecture, Civil Engineering, Survey, Town Planning and Services Engineers Coordination.

Guest concierge service takes patients to and from MHS

SINCE Macquarie Home Stay (MHS) first opened, staff noticed a real need for patients to use public transport or taxi services to get to and from hospital and other medical appointments.

Sometimes guests staying at MHS are unwell, so driving is not ideal. There is the stress of driving in a busy city environment for those who are not used to traffic lights, roundabouts and general traffic mayhem.

MHS, through consultation and partnership with Dubbo City Toyota and Gilgandra Toyota, provides a RAV4 vehicle as the new concierge service. Patients are now able to travel to and from hospital and medical appointments with ease thanks to the new service, offered five days a week.

The MHS concierge service would not be complete without the volunteer drivers who run the service weekly. Frances Rowley is one of them.

"I knew what a fantastic contribution MHS made to the community, the staff and the volunteers make a big impact on people's lives from a large part of western



Bert McClellan and Frances Rowley (pictured) are two volunteer drivers for the Macquarie Home Stay guest concierge service. Picture supplied

and central west NSW and as I had time on my hands I wanted to be part of this great organisation and I wanted to give back," Ms Rowley said.

"My greatest joy as a volunteer driver is listening to their stories and hopefully taking their minds off what treatment they may be having. I value the time I spend with the guests as I love talking to them, hearing where they come from, especially those that live out west. Also, every guest I pick up is so appreciative I pick up is so appreciative of the drivers and all the staff at MHS. So I guess you could say I value MHS as much as the guests."

Bert McClellan, another Dubbo local, began as a volunteer driver for MHS's concierge service in April this year. Bert ran a country mail run for over 20 years and has recently retired. "I had a bit of time on my hands so when I was asked would I like to do a bit of driving for the guests at MHS, I took up the challenge," Mr McClellan said.

To date, Bert has volunteered as a concierge driver at MHS for 31 days throughout the year and has assisted over 150 guests to arrive safely at their appointments around Dubbo. "No one guest values the work volunteers do more than others, all guests I have assisted have been very much appreciative of the service provided for them," Mr McClellan said.

Conversation and camaraderie over a meal

WHEN it comes to volunteering, the Dubbo community certainly knows how to put their hand up to help.

The Macquarie Home Stay (MHS) dinner program has become an institution where volunteers provide an evening home-cooked meal free of charge for the guests.

The dinners create an opportunity for not only a nourishing meal but a chance to catch up with other guests outside the hospital system.

If you're stuck at the hospital all day, or not feeling well, cooking a meal can be the last thing on your mind.

Guests going through similar medical journeys, whether they're having a baby, have a family member in hospital, are undergoing cancer treatment, or are staying by themselves, often appreciate the banter and conversations that arise through the dinner program.

This is particularly the case if they're away from home for many weeks.

The guests' dinners can have 30 or more attendees and all report how delicious the meals are, but more so the camaraderie and friend-



The Can Assist Dubbo members provide monthly dinners for MHS guests.

ships they've made through sharing a meal with strangers who then become friends.

In 2024-25, a total of 21 organisations provided dinners for guests on 134 evenings over the year - a tremendous achievement.

Bob Berry Real Estate is one of the volunteer guest services groups that provide dinners monthly at MHS and have done since 2022.

"Our monthly visits have become more than just a volunteering effort. They're a bonding experience that strengthens our workplace culture," said Karle De Kaste, Bob Berry Real Estate office manager.

"Staff often bring their partners and children, turning each visit into a shared moment of kindness. Beyond the meals, we offer emotional support through conversation and companionship. Many guests are far from home, facing serious medical challenges. A friendly chat or a listening ear can make a world of difference. This human connection is a core part of our contribution.

"We love being able to deliver a meal and provide some sort of normality for guests and ease the burden of cooking and have meaningful conversations. We often have our children attend with us and we see how much joy that brings to the kids and guests. It honestly warms the heart."

Can Assist Dubbo members also provide monthly dinners for MHS guests.

"The highlight for Can Assist members is chatting with MHS guests. We meet great people," said Susie Hill, co-ordinator Dubbo branch of Can Assist.

"There is a special joy in meeting families and mothers awaiting the arrival of their babies."



The Rob Berry Real Estate team have provided guest dinners since 2022. Pictures supplied

“ AT ASTLEY’S, WE BELIEVE THE BEST SPACES ARE CREATED WHEN A COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER. ”

We're proud to have played our part in supporting Macquarie Home Stay, an organisation that provides comfort, care and a sense of home for families during some of life's most challenging moments.

Macquarie Home Stay is a powerful reminder that when local businesses and the community work side by side, we can create places that truly support people when they need it most. We're honoured to stand alongside so many others who helped bring this important space to life.



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Renascent Regional congratulates Macquarie Home Stay on the completion of the CWA of NSW Guesthouse.

Renascent was proudly engaged to deliver Stage 2, it has been a pleasure to work with them and provide such an amazing facility for the people of regional NSW to use.

At the recent Master Builders Association Western Regions Awards, we entered this development in the award for best public building over \$5,000,000 - and we celebrated winning this category.

We congratulate Macquarie Home Stay on their vision and commitment to the people they support, our team worked hard to ensure the client's voice remained at the centre of every stage of delivery.

Renascent

The CWA of NSW along with our members who support and use the facility are proud of our association. Congratulations on providing such a wonderful community asset

Macquarie HomeStay

Dubbo
REGIONAL PATIENT & FAMILY ACCOMMODATION



CWA of NSW Guesthouse

Macquarie Home Stay acknowledges the amazing donors, sponsors and supporters that has helped bring this greatly needed patient accommodation facility to life.

- Country Women's Association of NSW
- Glencore
- Dubbo Regional Council
- Macdonald and Co Wool Brokers
- Community Bank Gilgandra - Bendigo Bank
- Pink Angels
- NSW Government
- Can Assist Dubbo and District Branch
- Endeavour Wool Exports
- Squadron Energy
- Rotary Club of Dubbo South
- Bogan Shire Council
- Glencore
- Frank and Beverley Brennan and Family
- Coonamble Shire Council
- Macdonald and Co Wool Brokers
- Mazda Foundation
- Dubbo Stock and Station Agents
- Canalese Family
- Rotary Club Mudgee Sunrise
- NSW Government - Office of Hospitality and Racing
- Endeavour Wool Exports
- Lions Club Dubbo
- Dubbo Prostate Cancer Support Group
- CWA Warren Branch
- Come By Chance Picnic Race Club
- Aurelia Metals
- Regional Australia Bank
- Rotary Club of Dubbo South
- Glencore
- Bourke Bowling Club
- Can Assist Nyngan Branch
- Mid-Western Regional Council
- Toyota Tour de Oroc
- Glencore
- Ringland and Rial Family
- CWA Castlereagh Country
- Walgett Floral Affair
- Rotary Club Mudgee Incorporated
- Duck Creek Races
- Glencore
- Dubbo Turf Club
- Louth Turf Club
- Coonamble Race Club
- Dunedoo Community
- Worrell Family Appeal
- Glencore
- Dubbo Community Men's Shed Incorporated
- The Community Charity Shop (UBL)
- Alan and Deidre Walker
- Rotary Club of Dubbo West
- Moolarben Coal Mines
- Dubbo 4WD Club
- Glencore
- Lions Club of Nyngan
- The Country Club - Dubbo
- Medical Students Association
- Macdonald and Co Wool Brokers
- Midstate Shearing Shed Nyngan
- REINSW Orana Division
- Back O Bourke Bike Ride for Cancer
- Nutrien Ag Solutions
- Glencore
- Handmade in the Bush
- Rotary Club of Coonabarabran
- Dubbo Kangaroos Rugby Club
- Officeworks Dubbo
- The Eureka Street Coffee Club Walgett
- Dempsey / Dunshea Golf Day
- Macquarie Sewcialites
- Dubbo Motorfest
- Rotary Club of Culbar

And if you have donated and supported this accommodation project, we thank you too.

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