



Media statement

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Rotary and high tech goggles project a perfect picture at Werribee Mercy Hospital

Patients at Werribee Mercy Hospital's Paediatrics Ward have been introduced to high-tech goggles to help curb anxieties when they're about to have needles or other medical procedures.

The Rotary Club of Werribee recently donated the funds for the purchase of what's known as a Smileyscope or virtual reality goggles.

The technology permits young patients to transition into a blissful new world, such as underwater or beach environments, distracting them from anxiety or pain that they are about to encounter.

WMH Nurse Unit Manager Simone Danaher says she has already seen examples of young patients moving into a wonderfully relaxed state, only a short time after putting on the goggles.

"It's a normal response brought on by the benefits of distraction, which transfers the patients into another world.

"The technology also seems to be able to reframe the pain a child is experiencing," Simone says. "The might occur when for, instance, the animation shows a fish nibbling at their arm just as they're about to receive an injection.

"Other benefits might include a reduction in sedations or other restraints and overall an improved patient experience."

The goggles can be modified to meet a patient's age, their interests and according to the type of procedure they are about to undergo.

Simone says the entire paediatrics ward staff was indebted to Rotary Club members for their 'amazing work and generous donations', which ultimately benefit our young patients and their families.

Rotary Club President Ian Hovey says watching a young patient Chevelle Cooke, who'd recently suffered a fractured wrist and elbow, go into a happy state assured club members that the donation was worthwhile.

“Who knows, we might be able to continue the fundraising and purchase another set of goggles.”

Simone says the goggles could have application in other areas across WMH such at the Emergency Department and surgical theatres.

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