MEDIA RELEASE

24 August 2016

Hatching chickens create talking point at aged-care facility

The residents and staff at Oakey Hospital’s Dr EAF McDonald Nursing Home can be forgiven for turning a little bit clucky recently with the arrival of some very popular visitors.

For a couple of weeks, the aged-care facility has hosted a clutch of eggs and subsequent baby chickens from the Henny Penny Hatching organisation.

The facility received delivery of the incubated, fertilised eggs and residents were given the opportunity to watch the newborns hatch each day over the course of two weeks.

Oakey Hospital Director of Nursing Matthew Boyd said the residents enjoyed the unique experience immensely.

“It is the first time we have had Henny Penny Hatchings,” Mr Boyd said.

“It was a real talking point for the residents, and the staff, alike. People would gather around the table each day and watch as the chickens broke through their eggs.”

The newborns were then transferred to a heated enclosure, where residents could touch and hold the chickens.

After the two week period, some of the chickens will be adopted by hospital staff, with the rest returning to Henny Penny for re-homing.

“The benefits of animal interaction, known as pet therapy, with aged-care residents are numerous,” recreation officer Lynda White said.

“Not only is it enjoyable, but it also brings back happy memories for our residents.

“It has also been shown to lower blood pressure, boost moods and improve communication between residents and staff.”

The Henny Penny Hatchings visit was funded by a generous donation from the Oakey Hospital’s Friends of McDonald organisation.

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