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Dear "Small Comforts Project" Volunteers,

On behalf of Alfred Mental and Addictions Health and in particular our inpatient mental health units, I wish to express our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support and generosity in driving and supporting our Small Comforts Project. The impact of your contributions has been significant, not just in enhancing our facilities and services, but more importantly, in touching the lives of our patients and their families.

Your support has provided essential items like toiletries, whilst basic necessities are often missing when patients are admitted. As one patient shared, "The toiletries help as when we are admitted we don't have these things with us when we come to hospital." This simple gesture has brought comfort and a sense of dignity during their stay.

The journals you provide have become a source of solace and self-expression for many patients. One remarked, "I like the journal to doodle and draw" another expressed: "I like the journal to write my thoughts and recently am using it to plan when I leave." Such tools have become invaluable in their journey towards healing and recovery.

Moreover, the environmental-friendly water bottles and high-quality socks you've donated have been received with great appreciation. Patients have expressed surprise and delight at these thoughtful gifts, with one stating, "I can't believe what good quality these socks are. I don't usually get these and I will keep these for sure."

The new basic clothes offer some comfort and respite and a soothing touch particularly following an often challenging and distressing experience during the hospital admission. The patients have said that it softens their experience as they cannot always access or find their belongings at the initial stages of their admission. One patient shared that: "I did not have any clothes other than what I came in with and had been wearing for days. I could not remember where my belongings were and when the nurse gave me a set of new casual things I felt a little bit more human." The disorganisation in the period prior to admission often means our patients experience hardship, have misplaced or lost belongings and these human touches can make such a difference to their experience coming to hospital.



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Your commitment to the community and to the cause of mental health is truly commendable. Your team of volunteers and actions through The Rotary Club and other partners such as St Stephens have not only provided practical assistance but have also conveyed a message of hope and care to those who may at times feel vulnerable and/or often overlooked.

With our sincere thanks and we look forward to our work together, and to further strengthening our partnership. We are so appreciative of your support and generosity in support of the community we serve. Your contributions make a genuine difference to how our patients experience care and treatment – and also allow our staff to establish relationships with our patients at a time of distress – a powerful reminder the importance of community and compassion.

Thank you once again for your kindness, generosity, and for standing with us in our mission to provide the best possible care to our patients.

With deepest appreciation,

Yours sincerely

Sandra Keppich-Arnold

Director of Operations,

Mental and Addiction Health