RPA celebrates the miracle of life with Easter Bonnet Parade

Hundreds of young survivors of the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA), and their families will once again don their finest clothes and most creative hats to celebrate the Hospital’s annual Easter Bonnet Parade later this month.

Last year more than 100 young NICU survivors aged from four months to six years old, their siblings, mums and dads and grandparents attended the inaugural event, held as a way of saying “Welcome back”.

NICU Director, Dr David Osborn, said the event was so popular last year with babies, toddlers and parents alike, organisers were expecting more families to attend this year.

“For many parents last year, it was the first time they had returned to RPA since their baby was in intensive care, and many commented that the event helped bring closure to a very difficult time in their life,” Dr Osborn said.

“They also appreciated the opportunity to thank the Unit’s staff in person for everything they did for their child and, for staff, it meant a lot to them to see the babies they looked after when they were so critically ill now so well and grown.

“The RPA Easter Bonnet Parade is such a celebratory, joyous and life-affirming event for everyone - the young survivors, their families and our staff,” he said.

Dr Osborn said this year’s event would again feature a panel of judges awarding prizes for the best hat/bonnet, and a “surprise” visit from the Easter Bunny with chocolate eggs galore to give away. There would also be a raffle with some great prizes to be won.

Each year, more than 5000 babies are born at RPA - the largest maternity hospital in NSW. The RPA Newborn Care cares for sick and premature babies from RPA as well as those transferred from other hospitals across the state.

Up to 900 babies are treated at RPA Newborn Care every year. In its 36 years of service, the Unit has cared for more 29,000 babies.

The Unit also provides support services for the mother, the infant and the family, including:

- Expert paediatric consultation to mothers at risk during pregnancy;
- Resuscitation of babies in the labour ward, theatre and birth centre (doctors from RPA Newborn Care attend all caesarean deliveries);
- Care of all well infants born in RPA including the Well Baby check prior to discharge; and,
- Parent education and information.

The RPA Easter Bonnet Parade will be held from 10am – noon, Wednesday, March 21.

For more information on RPA Newborn Centre, visit: http://www.sswahs.nsw.gov.au/rpa/neonatal/