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Therapeutic harp comforts and soothes patients

Beautiful melodies from a small harp are bringing comfort and joy to the patients of Camden Hospital's Palliative Care Unit.

The 10 volunteers at the unit raised the money to fund the \$888 purchase of the Reverie Harp after the instrument's success in soothing patients and promoting relaxation in palliative care in Australia and overseas.

The specially designed harp will be officially presented to the unit on 31 May following National Volunteers Week (May 21-27).

Bunnings will provide a barbecue lunch to mark the occasion.

Ms Arlene Roache, Volunteer Coordinator, South Western Sydney Local Health District Palliative Care Service, said patients could play the harp in bed or a volunteer or family member could play it for them.

"This harp is specially designed so anyone can play it. You don't have to be a musician," she said.

"You can strum it, or pluck the strings. Whichever way you choose to play it, the sounds are beautiful.

"As patients hold the harp to their chest, they can feel the vibrations.

"They can make their own music and are not passively listening. It is uplifting, the patients can forget their pain and be soothed and comforted."

The use of the harp in the palliative care unit supports the recently launched South Western Sydney Health and Arts Strategic Plan 2018-2023, which is aimed at transforming the care of people with illness and disability through creativity and imagination.

Ms Roache paid tribute to the palliative care volunteers as the unit marked National Volunteers Week.

"We are so fortunate to have such wonderful volunteers dedicated to patient care," she said.

"They are very special people and I thank them for their help and support during National Volunteers Week and every other week."

For more information on the Palliative Care volunteer program contact Arlene Roache on 8738 9755

