Lifelites makes magical memories for children at Grimsby children's hospice

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Children with life-limiting illnesses at Andy's at St Andrew's Hospice in Grimsby have received an incredible donation of specialist assistive technology worth thousands of pounds from national children's charity Lifelites.

Every moment is precious for these children, and the technology which Lifelites has donated can help them do things they never thought possible. They can play games with their friends, be creative with art and music, control something for themselves and communicate with their family, perhaps for the very first time. Most importantly it can help them create and record precious memories which will be treasured by their loved ones forever.

A Lifelites package of equipment, which includes training and technical support services provided by the charity costs around £50,000 over its four year lifespan, and is donated completely free of charge. Lifelites will replace the technology every four years.

The young people at Andy's are one of the first children's hospices in the country to receive a donation of Virtual Reality (VR) technology from Lifelites. This technology can immerse these young people in make believe worlds, or to take them to the other side of the planet, all from the comfort of the hospice. They can fly in space, go on safari, sit under the Northern Lights or even climb Mount Everest.

The children also received an Eyegaze. This is a piece of equipment which allows those with limited mobility to control a computer using just their eyes. By using the Eyegaze, children who struggle to communicate with their family and their carers are able to do so – often for the first time.

The charity also donated a whole host of other equipment, specially adapted for the children at the hospice. The package includes iPads and touchscreen computers with suitable apps, games and communication software, cameras to record memories and video games consoles with adapted controllers.

Lynn Andrews, Director of Clinical Services, St Andrew's Hospice

"We have patients here at Andy's who are limited to just being able to move a finger but the technology in these items donated from Lifelites means that they are able to play on their own.

"Children in wheelchairs can now experience what it is like to be on a rollercoaster or to walk along a beach - it is actually life-changing for them.

"There are not the words to describe how grateful we are to Lifelites and all the organisations that supported them for this most generous donation."

Worshipful Brother Stuart James Pearcey, Provincial Communications Officer, Provincial Grand Lodge of Lincolnshire said:

"It's nice for us to be able to put some funds towards something like this equipment from Lifelites, which makes such a difference to people's lives.

"What really excites us is that it isn't just the children who can make the best of this technology, but also the people that work here - it enhances what they can do for people who access the services at the hospice."

Alan Bernip of The Remington Club, Mablethorpe, where regulars raised nearly £8,000 for Lifelites said:

"The Remington Club is a social club in Mablethorpe and we learned about Lifelites about ten years ago.

"People I know watched the video on the Lifelites website and they soon came back to me with ideas of how to fundraise or ways they wanted to donate - it really struck a chord with people."

Simone Enefer-Doy, Chief Executive of Lifelites said:

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“We are delighted to be able to provide this magical technology for the children and young people at Andy’s. This technology will help them escape the confines of their conditions to do things they never dreamed of, for as long as it is possible. We couldn’t have provided this package if it wasn’t for the generosity of our donors, so for this we are incredibly grateful.”

Lifelites has donated equipment to every children’s hospice in the British Isles over the last 18 years, and continues to provide new technology and ongoing support to ensure that children in hospices have unlimited possibilities.

Lifelites was only able to donate this equipment thanks to the generosity of donors. They were the Bergne-Coupland Charity, the Hull and East Riding Charitable Trust, the Burghley Family Trust, the Remington Club, the John William Wright Deceased Trust, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Lincolnshire, the Michael Cornish Charitable Trust, the Marshall and Viggars Charitable Trust, Children with Cancer UK, GamesAid and Microsoft.

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