



Building Capacity to Keep Students Connected

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¹*The Canberra Hospital School Roadshow*

Research demonstrates that access to learning for students with significant illness or injury can be sporadic, and that levels of support provided by enrolled schools may not deal adequately with the lived experiences of these students (Yates et al, 2010; Gilmour, Hopkins, Meyer, Nell & Stafford, 2015). Hospital schools provide education support for students whose illness or injury prevents them from successfully participating in their enrolled school programs (Department of Education, Western Australia, 2017).

The Canberra Hospital School (the Hospital School) caters for students from Preschool to Year 12 who are short or long term patients of the Canberra Hospital and connects students back with their enrolled schools when appropriate. Students who attend the Hospital School come from the ACT, interstate and overseas. They can be enrolled in government schools, Catholic or Independent schools or home schooled, and have diverse cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds.

The Hospital School Roadshow (the Roadshow) is an initiative of the Disability Education section of the ACT Education Directorate (the Directorate), created as part of the Directorate response to the challenges faced by students with significant illness and injury. The goal of the Roadshow is to increase awareness of the Hospital School program, to build relationships between staff in enrolled schools and the Hospital School, and to provide support for enrolled schools in keeping students who are missing school connected to their learning. To achieve these goals, teachers from the Hospital School have developed an information program for staff at enrolled schools, and have delivered the program to a range of schools in Canberra.

This presentation will investigate the experience of establishing, implementing and reviewing the Roadshow. The impact of the Roadshow will be explored through the evaluation data provided by participating schools and the Hospital School teachers involved in the Roadshow presentation. Recommendations for future development of the Roadshow, and suggestions for its implementation in other jurisdictions will be considered.