



Light a life like **Laura's** this Christmas

Laura has epilepsy. Since she was just 11 months old she has suffered from frequent and severe seizures. The impact this has had on Laura and her family became real when hearing her father Bill's story...

"It has been a trauma of immense proportions for a very long time. For 16 years, Laura had seizures every day and endless changes of drug regimes. Her seizures were unpredictable and often had horrible outcomes. She'd just be standing there, and all of a sudden she'd drop down in front of you and hurt herself. We were on guard all the time," Bill reveals.

"Laura had been obviously traumatised by depression. She'd got to a stage where she was literally not eating, drinking and not talking. She'd lost a lot of weight. My wife ended up in hospital because of the stress. We didn't know what to do."

It was around this time that Bill first met the Director of Neuroscience, Professor Harry McConnell, at an epilepsy seminar and enlisted him as Laura's consulting Neuropsychiatrist.

"Ultimately, Professor McConnell decided that Laura would be the first patient he would have in the new unit at St Vincent's Brisbane," Bill recalls.

"During her first few days there, medical staff realised that she had been too depressed to eat and drink and she was severely dehydrated. She was placed on a drip, and within 48 hours started to respond. The decision was then made to put Laura on an anti-depressant."

When she left St Vincent's Brisbane three weeks later, she was telling stories about her friends and her dog like any 17-year-old would. Seeing that change in Laura in just three weeks was rewarding.

"She was eating, drinking and communicating. The change was dramatic. We were able to get Laura back," Bill explained.

Now we're consulting with Professor McConnell to reduce the impact of Laura's seizures and depression, and hopefully give her a better life. We are slowly but surely achieving that."

**More than 75,521
journeys of which
Laura's is but one.**

*We have thousands
more journeys ahead,
and we can't do it
without your help.*

