Doctors with magic touch

Nepean Hospital staff learn new tricks of the trade to help rehabilitation patients get back on their feet

Rehab patient Eddie Cordona with Dr Adrian Sheen and Nurse Unit Manager Ros Raynard. Picture: Justin Sanson

Isabella Petrinic

IN an Australian first, staff at Nepean Hospital will be trained to offer magic therapy to patients in rehabilitation.

The life-changing magic therapy and rehabilitation program is the brainchild of Penrith general practitioner Dr Adrian Sheen and a former intensive care unit (ICU) patient Ken Brooke.

The pair have been working together for over 2½ years to bring magic therapy to the hospital on a regular basis, after seeing the motivational power of magic on people's recoveries.

That dream became a reality last Thursday when the first batch of doctors, nurses and physiotherapy aides were given magic lessons in the hospital’s Aged Care and Rehabilitation Centre.

The patient program will now be offered on a fortnightly basis.

“I haven’t seen so much laughter in the ward for a long time,” said Roslynn Raynard, nurse manager for the rehabilitation ward.

Dr Sheen, who is also a GP lecturer at The University of Sydney, said: “The eight patients all had smiles on their faces.”

Among them was Eddie Cordona, of Penrith, who after suffering a stroke in mid-March lost mobility down the left side of his body.

Mr Cordona said he never imagined that magic would form part of his treatment.

“I expected something else quite different,” he laughed.

“Think it’s a brilliant idea because I used to play guitar and the magic is helping loosen my fingers up.”

Ms Raynard said: “It’s not just fun – it’s helping with coordination, fine motor skills and focus.”

“Magic motivates people to use their weakened physical skills because they want to achieve the trick,”

Magician Jack Daniels

■ To sponsor the Project Magic program, email dracsheen@gmail.com.