The echo of laughing children will fill the wards of Royal Darwin Hospital when the innovative Captain Starlight program begins later this month.

Captain Starlight is the face of the Starlight Children’s Foundation and is best known for entertaining children undergoing hospital treatment.

Later this month, two Captain Starlights will be permanently based at the Royal Darwin Hospital and will make regular visits to young patients at Gove, Katherine and Alice Springs hospitals.

The Health Minister Chris Burns attended a special preview at RDH today as part of the Foundation’s 50 Towns in 50 Weeks tour – a 22,000-kilometre journey by Captain Starlight to spread laughter and magic to hospitalised kids.

“Enforced hospital stays can be hard on adults let alone children,” he said.

“Having Captain Starlight brighten the days of Territory children who are sometimes undergoing stressful treatments will make their stay in hospital just that little bit easier.”

The Starlight Children’s Foundation provides distractive therapy programs to help alleviate pain and boredom. It also grants Starlight Wishes to seriously ill children and holds outings for sick children and their families.

“The Foundation is a worthwhile organisation that provides an important and highly valued service. I’m looking forward to Captain Starlight performing magic, singing and dancing for Territory children for many years.”

Dr Burns said more than 12,500 Territory children are admitted to hospital every year.
The Captain Starlight scheme has been operating since 1988. The *50 Towns in 50 Weeks* tour is being sponsored by Caltex as part of its 50 years of refining fuel in Australia.

The tour has already been through Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine.

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