CJ, Joanne, and Penny's Beach Holiday | Hartley Lifecare

Planning a holiday for three of our lovely Hartley Lifecare clients, including one who uses a wheelchair and is PEG-fed, was a rewarding challenge that took around three months of preparation. We considered a few destinations, but accessibility was our top priority, particularly the need for suitable accommodation with a hoist, shower chair, and rail bed, as well as ramp access with no stairs, and a quiet and peaceful environment.



Joanne, Penny & Carol-Jayne

After extensive research and limited accessible options, we ultimately chose Tathra Beach House, just three hours' drive from home, as it met our needs for comfort, accessibility, and ease of travel.

We began our search online, browsing photos and information, then followed up with a phone call to the Tathra Beach House to discuss our specific requirements. The staff were incredibly helpful and supportive. We hired equipment from Independent Living Specialists and arranged for a hoist, shower chair, and rail bed to be delivered and installed before our arrival. We also requested ground-floor apartments with no stairs, as well as light housekeeping support during our stay.



Penny, Carol-Jayne & Joanne with Hartley Lifecare Carers

We pre-booked all our dining venues and activities in advance to ensure the trip ran as smoothly as possible. The ladies were excited, and knowing everything was planned ahead of time helped reduce stress and made it easier to manage care routines.

We visited Cooma for brunch on the way, which was halfway from home, and stayed two nights at Tathra Beach House in two connected apartments. The highlight of the second day was a boat cruise from Eden Wharf. However, due to the rough sea and the movement of the boat, our wheelchair-using client was unable to board safely. While the others enjoyed the cruise and a picnic lunch, we adapted the plan for Penny, who instead explored the Eden Whale Museum, visited the local visitor centre, and took a lovely walk along the wharf and harbour shoreline.



Penny with her Hartley Lifecare Carers exploring Eden

On the final day, since Penny's wheelchair couldn't access the sand at the beach, we took her to the Tathra Lookout, where she could enjoy the ocean views from a safe, accessible location. It turned out to be a stunning and peaceful experience for her.

While not everything went exactly to plan, specifically the cruise activity, our flexibility and backup ideas made it a memorable holiday for everyone. Our clients and staff shared moments of joy, laughter, and connection, and the trip truly felt like a family getaway.

CASE STUDY
Accessible & Inclusive Tourism

This experience reinforced the importance of thoughtful planning, open communication with providers, and a flexible mindset in making tourism accessible, inclusive and enjoyable for all.

Looking back, we will plan tours with more stable access points or have an alternative activity pre-planned for such scenarios in the future.

Find out more:



Accessible and Inclusive Tourism
Contact Destination Southern NSW via info@dsnsw.com.au or visit www.dsnsw.com.au/pathways/access-inclusion

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