

# Spastic Centre Country Children's Hostel

1948 – c. 2007

**Other Names:**

- McLeod House
- New South Wales Hostel for Country Children
- The Spastic Centre

## Details

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The Spastic Centre Country Children's Hostel, also known as McLeod House and the New South Wales Hostel for Country Children, was a hostel for country children with cerebral palsy run by The Spastic Centre. A pilot hostel was established in Mosman in 1948 and a purpose-built facility opened in Allambie Heights in 1957. State wards were sent to this home. In 2007 the Centre was still providing residential services, possibly including children. In 2011 the organisation changed its name to Cerebral Palsy Alliance.

The Spastic Centre was established in 1945 by a group of parents led by Neil and Audrie McLeod, whose daughter had cerebral palsy, which was then referred to as 'spastic paralysis'. It was the first organisation of its type in the world.

The McLeods and a group of volunteer parents started a treatment centre in a borrowed house in Queen Street, Mosman. The Spastic Centre preferred to work with families, but it was very difficult for country families who had children with cerebral palsy to access services. The Spastic Centre established a pilot hostel in Glover Street in Mosman in 1948.

The foundation stone for a purpose-built hostel in Allambie Heights was laid in 1953. This hostel was built with voluntary labour and was opened on 9 February 1958 by the Governor of New South Wales. It was called McLeod House, after the founders of the Centre. It contained a hospital.

A severe fire gutted The Spastic Centre's administration building in 2007, but McLeod House was not damaged. In 2008 The Spastic Centre began raising funds to replace the building, which was by then considered unsuitable for therapy and accommodation for children.

The Spastic Centre changed its name to the Cerebral Palsy Alliance in 2011.

## Gallery

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**State wards at Spastic Centre, Allambie Heights**

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### McLeod House

**Description:** This is a copy of an image from *Nothing Is Impossible*, it shows McLeod House.

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### Building a Future for Spastic Paralysis Victims

**Description:** This video, produced in 1940, features McCleod House, also known as the Spastic Centre Country Children's Hostel, in Mosman, Sydney. It shows scenes of life at the home, including children participating in classes, physical excercises, handcrafts, and at meal time. The narration gives an overview of the purpose of the centre and the methods used in treating the children with spastic paralysis. Please note the British Pathe website has incorrectly titled this film as 'Sydney - Downs Syndrome Children'.

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## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [The Spastic Centre of New South Wales \(1945 - 2011\)](#)

### Resources

- Earl, Dave, [Caring for the Children. Forever: Parent-run organisations for children with disabilities in New South Wales, 1950-1968](#), 2007

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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/spastic-centre-country-childrens-hostel/>