



Media Release

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Flying Doctor Urges Public to Include a Charity

Donor dollars are the lifeblood of many charities, including the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS), which relies on donations, on top of the Commonwealth and state government allocations it receives, to continue to deliver the finest care to the furthest corners of New South Wales.

Donor funding helps the RFDS, one of the largest and most comprehensive aeromedical organisations in the world, deliver extensive primary healthcare and 24-hour emergency services to those who live, work and travel throughout Australia, using the latest in aviation, medical and communications technology.

Nationally, these services are delivered by a fleet of 63 aircraft operating from 21 bases across Australia, providing medical assistance to over 295,000 people every year, or one every two minutes.

“Donations made through programs the like the John Flynn Legion, a special group of people who have indicated that they want to leave a gift in their Wills, are always welcome, particularly in a tight fiscal climate with both charity and health dollars at a premium,” said Greg Sam, Chief Executive Officer of RFDS South Eastern Section.

“Gifts left in Wills are an important income stream for many charities in Australia and without them many would struggle to survive,”

“That’s why we are participating in Include a Charity (IaC) Week (8-14 September), which aims to change the way Australians think about including charities in their Wills. Its purpose is to raise awareness of the ease and effectiveness of leaving a gift in your Will and grow the proportion of Australians who have included a gift in their Will to charity to 14 per cent by 2020.”

Although 70 per cent of Australians donate during their lifetimes and 29 per cent say they intend to leave a charitable gift in their Will, after friends and family are provided for, only 7.5 per cent actually do.”

IaC have estimated that if just 12 per cent of people left a Bequest that would generate an additional \$440 million for the charity sector as a whole.

“It is interesting to note that the Flying Doctor was founded through a bequest from noted Victorian pastoralist, Hugh McKay, to the Reverend John Flynn,” said Mr Sam.

“Flynn used the money to make his long-held dream of establishing a new kind of medical service, combining the revolutionary technologies of aviation and radio, become reality in 1928. The rest, as they say, is history.”

In more recent times there are many examples of how bequests have greatly helped the work of the RFDS. For example, Joy Mawson not only supported the Flying Doctor during her life, but wanted to ensure their work could continue after her death by leaving a gift in her Will.

Joy was famous for inventing Trauma Teddies, which could be knitted using a simple pattern, to help comfort sick and distressed children. Through the donations she received for the teddy patterns and her own formidable knitting skills, Joy raised many thousands of dollars for the RFDS.

She often remarked how proud she was to support the RFDS. Joy’s generosity has helped the RFDS do what they do best, save lives.

“Gifts like the one left by Joy make a terrific difference to the RFDS, as they enable us to make provision for current services and plan for the future,” said Mr Sam.

If you would like to become a member of the John Flynn Legion, please call our Donor Care Manager, in confidence, on 02 9941 8888.

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For more information or photographs, contact:

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ABOUT THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE

The not-for-profit Royal Flying Doctor Service has been taking the finest care to the furthest corners of Australia since 1928. The service provides 24 hour emergency cover to 90% of the Australian continent, via a modern fleet of specially equipped aircraft. In the past year, the South Eastern Section flew the equivalent of 6.25 round trips to the moon as it conducted over 5,000 clinics, took over 6,000 telehealth calls, had over 53,000 patient contacts and transported almost 8,400 patients.