



October 31, 2016 (for Nov 2 @ 7.30am)

**Attention: News Editor/Chief of Staff 9 News
MEDIA RELEASE**

**Snake bite patient pleased flying doctor is there to help
anytime, anywhere**

30-year-old Mosman Park man David Bruce never thought he would need the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

However, he remembers vividly the start of our warm weather a couple of years ago and then being aero-medically retrieved from Rottneest Island after being bitten by a deadly dugite snake.

“I was visiting Rottneest Island with my wife and her father and we were out bike riding,” David said.

“We had seen quite a few snakes that day, in fact I’d ridden right past three or four of them in a short space of time – apparently, the start of the warm weather is mating season for snakes.

“I saw one right near the front wheel of my bike and managed to avoid it but didn’t realise there was a second one. I kept riding around the island then saw there were two puncture marks on the back of my leg.

“Fortunately I knew some basic first aid and knew not to move around and to stay calm. My fiancée called the nurses’ post on the island and they called the RFDS.”

David said he had previously worked in some remote parts of Western Australia and had often seen the flying doctor come in to pick up seriously ill patients.

“I was aware of the flying doctor, but living in Perth, I never really thought I would need them.

“I was pretty pleased to see that plane though and once on board I knew I was in excellent hands. The doctor and nurse on board made me so relaxed I was busy snapping pictures of the amazing sunset off Rottneest as we took off.

“I received fantastic medical treatment from the minute I was on the aircraft and the medical staff knew exactly what to do, then in no time I was at Jandakot and then taken to hospital.”

RFDS Chief Executive Officer Grahame Marshall said the flying doctor is frequently at Rottneest Island and other holiday spots around the state retrieving patients, many who are visiting from the Perth metropolitan area.

There were 43 patients aero medically retrieved by the RFDS from Rottneest during the last warm weather period, between 1 September 2015 and the end of March this year.

“People enjoying activities over the holiday season unfortunately sometimes have accidents in the water, fall off bikes or suffer snake bites and other emergencies which often need urgent medical attention, “Mr Marshall said.

“We are pleased to be there wherever and whenever we are needed around our state, 365 days a year.”

Mr Marshall said support from the public is critical in terms of the costs involved in replacing, maintaining, and fitting out the organisation's aircraft - and in purchasing the essential medical equipment required to save lives.

“That is why every single person who donates to the Flying Doctor Service is so important to us and our patients - because without your help we couldn't achieve the successful life-saving outcomes for our patients that we do.

“The RFDS is as relevant and essential to all Western Australians today as we have ever been throughout our history.

The RFDS provides emergency care, life-saving outcomes, and health treatment and advice to almost 70,000 people in Western Australia every year and has done now in WA for over 80 years.

To donate to the RFDS call 1300 669 569 or check out www.flyingdoctor.org.au

INTERVIEW/VISION OPPORTUNITY

Date: Wednesday November 2, 2016

Time: 7.30am

Location: RFDS, Eagle Drive, Jandakot

Who: RFDS CEO Grahame Marshall and snake bite patient David Bruce

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