

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 3 May 2016

RFDS position regarding SA Ambulance (SAAS) insurance cover

The Royal Flying Doctor Service Central Operations (RFDS) reassures South Australians that changes announced by SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) to its insurance cover does NOT change the way the RFDS operates in South Australia.

The RFDS makes the following statement to clarify its operations in South Australia:

Where the RFDS is called to a primary evacuation in the event of, for example, a motor vehicle accident in a remote area, a snake bite or illness while travelling, there is no charge to the recipient of RFDS services. There may, however, be occasions where a third-party insurer is responsible for the costs and RFDS will submit accounts for those circumstances.

Nor is there any charge where a public patient is transferred (an inter-hospital transfer) from one regional public hospital to a metropolitan public hospital, or vice versa, by the RFDS. The cost is covered by the public health system.

The only time a cost is incurred is where the patient is privately insured and is admitted to hospital as a private patient.

In this case, the inter-hospital transfer requires the consent of the patient's private insurer be it a private health insurance fund or SAAS. The same requirement for consent applies when the transfer involves travel to or from interstate.

The RFDS urges all holders of private health insurance to regularly review their emergency (road and air ambulance) cover with their insurance provider to ensure they are adequately covered.

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