



Media Alert

25 June 2015

Flying Doctor offers free health screenings at Brewarrina Field Day

Thanks to a grant from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal through their “Tackling Tough Times Together” program, a Royal Flying Doctor Service South Eastern Section (RFDS SE) health team will be conducting free health screenings at the Brewarrina Field Day between 10am and 4pm on Saturday, 27 June. Western Local Health District staff will be partnering with a RFDS doctor, nurses and mental health experts for this event, providing local knowledge and referral pathways to attendees, as well as additional resources on the day.

“Through such community events we can cover additional rural and remote locations, on top of those we visit on our regular clinic runs and ‘Fly Around Clinics,’ ” said Linda Cutler, General Manager, Health Services at the RFDS SE.

“We do it because we recognise the value of regular health checks in increasing the chances of early detection and a positive outcome through changes to lifestyle, diet or medical treatment.”

“Our medical team will be running a full health screening at Brewarrina. Although we cater for both sexes, the RFDS is hoping to convince male visitors, who will book their car in for a regular service, but are reluctant to see a doctor, to make a ‘pit stop’ for a health ‘rego’ check.”

This car-themed health screening model has proved very effective for doing health screenings at community events. It has seven stages.

After a first ‘pit stop’ for registration, oil and duco (blood pressure and skin) get checked, followed by chassis and exhaust (weight and heart smoking/ lung), fuel additives (AusD-diabetes screen, diet and alcohol check) and shock absorbers (mental health screen).

The final two ‘pit stops’ are with a GP who tests spark plugs (testes) and assesses whether the participant is ‘roadworthy’ enough to get their ‘rego’ papers at stage six, or needs to go on to stage seven for further tuning and maintenance.

“The entire process takes around 15-20 minutes and health-wise may be the most important investment you ever made,” said Ms Cutler.

Next door to the RFDS SE medical tent will be the aeromedical simulator, a full-sized replica of the flight deck and fuselage of a RFDS King Air B200 aircraft. Measuring 9.1m long, 2.4m wide and 3m high, it comes complete with flight deck and full aeromedical fit-out.

On boarding the aeromedical simulator visitors can sit in the pilot’s seat or on the bench seats in the back and experience what it’s like to be a RFDS pilot, flight nurse, or flying

doctor. RFDS SE Education Officer, Sarah Little, will be on hand to explain the aircraft's capabilities, what the medical equipment in these 'flying intensive care units' does and recount some real-life rescue stories.

The Simulator helps promote the vital emergency and primary healthcare clinics the Flying Doctor brought to over 280,000 Australians last year. It also helps to explain the need to raise additional funding each year, on top of any Commonwealth and state government allocations, so the RFDS can continue to deliver and grow its range of services.

The guided tour through the simulator is open to the public for a suggested gold coin donation.

What: RFDS health screenings at Brewarrina Field Day.

Who: RFDS SE medical staff, including some of the mental health team partnered with staff from the Western Local Health District.

When: Saturday, 27 June 2015 between 10am and 4pm.

Where: Arthur Hall VC Way, Brewarrina NSW 2839.

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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.