



Media Release

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## **Flying Doctors named 'most reputable charity' for fifth straight year**

Research consultants AMR have named the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) 'the most reputable charity in Australia' for the fifth straight year.

AMR's annual Charity Reputation Index surveys a cross-section of the Australian public to measure the overall reputation of the country's 40 largest charities and ranks them accordingly using a scoring system. The measurement also includes a range of dimensions such as Service, Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership and Cost Management.

Managing Director of AMR, Oliver Freedman, revealed that the RFDS ranked first on six of the seven underlying reputation dimensions (Services, Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership and Cost Management) coming first in all categories except leadership.

"We are delighted to be honoured for the fifth straight year and ranked above many other well known and regarded charities," said Greg Sam, Chief Executive Officer of the RFDS' South Eastern Section (RFDS SE).

"This award is testament to the hard work and dedication of the RFDS staff, who helped some 292,000 people across Australia in the past year, and to the connection the Service has with the communities we serve. "More than a service, part of the community" has been the ethos of the Flying Doctor throughout its almost 90 year history."

The number one ranking also recognises the 'value for money' the RFDS provides in delivering a consistently high quality of service, always with a focus on improved health outcomes to remote, rural and regional communities, despite the relatively high costs of running an aeromedical service.

"It also speaks to the innovative approach the RFDS take to funding new and enhanced services delivery. The Flying Doctor partners with other health organisations, charities, corporate entities and community groups to enable the delivery of new and enhanced services in response to the needs of the communities we serve". Added Mr Sam.

In 2012 the RFDS South Eastern Section (RFDS SE) forged a public/private partnership with the Investec Foundation and the Gonski Foundation (along with donations from the public) to deliver The Outback Oral Treatment and Health program (TOOTH) to four communities in the North West of NSW. In just three years it halved the rate of tooth decay in children and significantly improved adult oral health across all four communities.

A few months ago a collaborative partnership between NSW Ambulance, the RFDS SE, Pathology West - Dubbo and Western NSW Local Health District now enables blood and blood products to be stored at the RFDS Dubbo Base and on-board aircraft. This allows flight nurses and retrieval doctors to perform blood transfusions on patients suffering persistent life threatening bleeding, whilst in the air.

During 2015 the RFDS SE unveiled a bold four-year strategic plan to narrow the gap in health and wellness between those living in remote and rural areas and those in the cities.

The first phase of that ambitious strategy saw the launch earlier this month of a new Patient Transfer road service, which enables the RFDS SE to control all the “links” in its patient transfer “chain” and employ a common delivery system. Patients from Western NSW now receive greater continuity of care between their homes and hospital and a more comfortable and certain transfer service. The fleet of six vehicles will enable local ambulance services to preserve their priority status and free up much-needed beds in regional and metropolitan hospitals. Community funding contributed some \$250,000 to the purchase and fit-out of vehicles.

During 2016 the South Eastern Section will make further announcements regarding new and enhanced services.

“The RFDS does rely on fundraising, above and beyond the government grants and contacts we receive to deliver and expand our services. Last year 24% of our funding came from donations and bequests,” added Mr Sam.

“The public can be assured that the Flying Doctor provides an excellent return on every fundraising dollar it receives and it’s gratifying to know that we have such strong support for our mission to deliver improved health outcomes to remote, rural and regional communities.”

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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 conducted almost 5,000 clinics, took over 6,400 telehealth calls, had over 53,500 patient contacts and transported almost 8,500 patients.