



Media Release

18 August 2015

Flying Doctor to raise skin cancer awareness at Ganmain Show

The South Eastern Section of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS SE) will have a presence at the Ganmain Show for the first time when it joins forces with Cancer Council NSW and Murrumbidgee Local Health District staff to raise local awareness about skin cancer.

This initiative comes in the wake of the NSW Cancer Institute's 2014 Skin Cancer Online Tracking survey, which found that three of the five non-coastal NSW locations recording "significantly high incidences of melanomas" were in the Riverina. While only 1:10 young people are now sunbaking and tans are now regarded as less desirable, only 36 per cent of young people surveyed regularly apply sunscreen before going out, while over 40 per cent say they simply forget. A quarter (26%) said they couldn't be bothered.

"As a provider of comprehensive healthcare services the RFDS recognises that proactive health education and regular health checks can increase the chances of early detection and a positive outcome through changes to lifestyle, diet or medical treatment," said Sarah Little, Education Officer for RFDS SE.

"Ganmain, 55km north west of Wagga Wagga, is a little outside the traditional RFDS SE footprint, but we are attending with the aeromedical simulator as part of an expanded community engagement program and to support of the other organisations,"

The aeromedical simulator is 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 and complete with flight deck and full aeromedical fit-out, it will be one of the Show's star attractions and a great way to engage with the public and raise the subject of personal health.

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.

The Simulator will also be visiting St Brendon's Primary School, Ganmain Primary School, Coolomon Primary School and Marrar Public School in the week after the show to talk about the history and the work of the RFDS and help reinforce the sun awareness message.

"Warmer weather is just around the corner and where sun awareness is concerned you can never start too young," said Sarah.

What: RFDS SE aeromedical simulator at Ganmain Show.

Who: Sarah Little, Education officer RFDS SE and education team.

When: Saturday, 22 August 2015 between 10am and 4pm.

Where: Ganmain Showground, Ganmain 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.