





OUR STORY >

The Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS) has been saving lives in rural and remote Australia for more than 95 years.

Using the latest in aviation, medical and communications technology, the RFDS delivers emergency aeromedical and comprehensive community healthcare services to people who live, work and travel throughout Australia, every day (and night) of the year.

Established in 1928 by the Reverend John Flynn, the RFDS has grown to become one of the world's largest and most comprehensive aeromedical organisations.

Nationally, our vital services are delivered by a dedicated workforce of over 1,800 staff, a fleet of more than 80 aircraft located at 23 aeromedical bases, 290 road vehicles and five remote community health facilities.

Today the RFDS delivers more than 380,000 episodes of care across Australia every year - equivalent to assisting someone every two minutes.

Services are delivered on a day-to-day basis by six RFDS operating sections – South Australia & Northern Territory (SA/NT), Queensland Section, South Eastern Section, Tasmania Section, Victoria Section and Western Operations.

RFDS SA/NT began in 1939 and delivers 24/7 emergency aeromedical and comprehensive community healthcare services throughout South Australia and the Northern

We operate four aeromedical bases in Adelaide, Port Augusta, Alice Springs and Darwin, four remote primary healthcare facilities in Andamooka, Marla, Marree, Innamincka and a Virtual Emergency Centre in William Creek in outback South Australia, as well as Patient Transfer Facilities in Mount Gambier and Renmark.

The RFDS is a for-purpose organisation. While supported by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, the RFDS relies on bequests, fundraising and donations to bridge the gap in operational funding and to finance our capital-raising program for the replacement of aircraft, medical equipment and other major capital initiatives.



The RFDS acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging

Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia

His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie PSM, Administrator of the Northern Territory

REDS PC-24 and aeromedical crew conducts a remote retrieval | Outback SA

CHAIR'S REPORT >

Since Alfred Traeger's pedal radio helped kickstart the Flying Doctor in the 1920s, our organisation has proudly positioned itself at the forefront of new technologies and ideas.

Working closely with our government and service delivery partners in South Australia and the Northern Territory, we continue to drive our health services into the future.

This year, in partnership with South Australia's Outback Communities Authority (OCA), we brought another Flying Doctor innovation to life, launching an Australian-first Virtual Emergency Centre that enables 24/7 emergency medical care with no health professionals physically in the room.

The Virtual Emergency Centre, operating within a new RFDS clinic in the outback town of William Creek, has revolutionised health care for town residents, neighbouring stations and the thousands who travel through Far North SA for generations to come.

OCA, through the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, underpinned the project with a \$1 million funding injection.

Our vision to establish the nation's first outback centre for health and education is also becoming closer to being realised with construction starting in Port Augusta in late 2024.

By incorporating a multidisciplinary health clinic and training base under one roof, the state-of-the-art centre aims to reverse the tide of workforce shortages and enhance regional health outcomes, while serving as a rich training ground for clinicians to learn and develop outside of the city.

These pioneering facilities add to our existing pair of Patient Transfer Facilities (PTFs) in South Australia's Riverland and South East, which have helped our teams and SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) crews to enhance airside care at these frequented RFDS landing locations for more than 1,000 patients every year.

Our Riverland PTF has been operational for 12 months and construction of a similar facility is underway in Tennant Creek to serve patients in remote Central Australia, highlighting our long-term commitment to the Northern Territory.

With a proud 85-year history serving the Territory, we continue to search for new ways to increase our footprint, from the Top End down, to ensure patients and communities have access to high-quality health care.

Our Darwin team launched a Low-Acuity Medical Retrieval Service in early 2024, specifically for the air transfer of remote Territory surgical, palliative, low-mobility and otherwise stable patients. This new service aims to support NT Health by alleviating pressure on emergency services and hospital capacities, and ensure a safe and assured patient journey between home and hospital.

This year, we also celebrated the first anniversary of the RFDS *Electronic Health Record* (EHR) which, since integration, has enhanced the quality of medical documentation, patient handover and in-flight planning.

Our SA/NT team has led the development and rollout of the EHR across RFDS Queensland and South Eastern Sections, affording our clinicians across the country more valuable time to focus on the direct care needs of our patients.

In recognition of this incredible advancement, the RFDS EHR Project Team was awarded Rural/Remote Health Innovator of the Year at the inaugural Rural Health Pro National Rural and Remote Health Awards.

To realise these landmark initiatives and future developments, the RFDS Board and Executive Leadership Team have proactively sought backing from government and corporate partners and strengthened relationships with patients, communities, supporters and collaborative health partners.

We also continue to receive generous ongoing support from our loyal corporate and community partners, bequestors, donors and supporters, who this year dug deeper than ever.

Led by our Philanthropy Team – and backed by the steadfast support of the community – we generated a record \$18 million in fundraising.

This income is vital to meet the shortfall in our operational funding to deliver health services and finance our demanding capital expenditure program for aircraft replacement and public value projects, such as our rural and remote innovation, technology and infrastructure that advance care and patient experience.

A highlight was our inaugural Giving Day, 'Double Up for the Doc Day', during which \$425,000 was raised in less than 24 hours with the help of our generous dollar-matching partners.

Our annual 'Wings for Life' Gala Ball also attracted a sell-out crowd for the *Galapalooza* edition, raising \$255,000, while the RFDS's national fitness and fundraising challenge, Oceans to Outback, saw more than 2,500 participants from South Australia and the Northern Territory get active to generate over \$660,000 for the organisation.

While we renewed valuable partnerships with agricultural icons Elders Limited and S. Kidman & Co, we also officially welcomed Peter Kittle Motor Company as a major partner following almost two decades of support from the Australian car dealership.

Our team in SA/NT is also proud to contribute to a new multi-million-dollar partnership with Australia's largest not-for-profit health fund, HCF. HCF and RFDS share a strong focus on providing access to quality, consistent care regardless of location.

Elsewhere in the public sphere, it has been humbling to see the efforts of the Flying Doctor formally recognised.

The RFDS was announced Australia's Most Reputable Charity for the 12th time according to the annual Charity Reptrak survey and named the country's most trusted not-for-profit in the 2024 Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands survey.

This recognition speaks volumes to the high-flying community that surrounds the RFDS and the passion shared by all of our stakeholders in ensuring rural and remote Australians have access to

high-quality emergency and essential primary health care.

I would like to thank my fellow Board Members for their selfless commitment throughout the year, Chief Executive Tony Vaughan ASM and the Executive Leadership Team, and the entire RFDS workforce and cohort of volunteers for carrying our values and driving our purpose with such vigour.

Finally, we couldn't do what we do without the individuals and groups who continue to back us – the energy you impart continues to propel our life-saving service into the future.



Peter de Cure AM



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT >

As the Royal Flying Doctor Service continues to evolve in new directions to meet growing health needs, our core focus remains, as always, on positioning our patients at the heart of everything we do.

Over the last 12 months, we have delivered almost 50,000 episodes of care to patients in South Australia and the Northern Territory – someone every 10 minutes.

From emergency retrievals to essential primary health care, the RFDS remains committed to bridging the gap in healthcare access between remote Australians and their city counterparts, collaborating with our government and service delivery partners to advance care and patient experience.

Diversifying our community health services is part of this commitment, with the Flying Doctor recently introducing new services such as physiotherapy and specialist child and family nursing, and strengthening our Aboriginal Health program.

We know oral health is a window to overall wellbeing and our dedicated Oral Health Team of dentists, dental hygienists and remote oral health assistants continue to lead the way in remote preventative care and timely treatments.

The team spent more than 40 weeks of the year travelling to remote communities, providing care to 1,500 patients across South Australia and the Northern Territory.

The work of our Mental Health and Wellbeing teams out of Port Augusta and Alice Springs continues to serve a vital role in tackling the silent mental health crisis in rural and remote areas of the country.

Remote Aboriginal communities like Willowra in Central Australia, with a population of around 400 people, have historically had little access to mental health outreach services until the Flying Doctor recently began delivering outreach support in collaboration with the local school.

As we build our emergency response capability through the establishment of regional Patient Transfer Facilities, an outback Virtual Emergency Centre and service extensions such as our Low-Acuity Medical Retrieval Service in the Top End, our aeromedical teams have had their busiest year in recent record.

In South Australia and the Northern Territory, working in partnership with SA Ambulance Service (SAAS), SAAS MedSTAR and the Medical Retrieval and Consultation Centre (MRaCC), we airlifted more than 10,500 patients, which included over 1,900 primary retrievals and more than 8,500 inter-hospital transfers.

Accompanying our care in the air, our Road Ambulance Service continues to grow, with an on-call roster of 30 paramedics and patient transport officers helping to create more capacity in the health system for ambulance crews to rapidly respond to life-threatening emergencies and hospital repatriations.

Meanwhile, our permanent remote community health clinics in the outback towns of Marree, Marla, Andamooka and Innamincka continue to be a 24/7 lifeline to local communities, surrounding pastoral stations, freighters and travellers.

Every day, I witness our organisational core values, *Care, Integrity, Collaboration* and *Innovation* embedded in our work and I am extremely proud to lead a purpose-driven organisation with such a diverse workforce dedicated to supporting healthier and happier lives.

This year, we held our inaugural RFDS Values Awards, an employee-led initiative recognising exemplary individuals and teams across these areas, from our patient-facing care to our work behind the scenes in the hangar and in administration.

As ongoing training and upskilling of our workforce remains a priority, we were delighted to have two RFDS Flight Nurses complete a Graduate Certificate in Aeromedical Retrieval from Charles Darwin University.

The RFDS played a key role in developing the curriculum of the Australian-first program in 2021, which also saw its inaugural cohort of master's students graduate this year.

We also introduced a new professional development initiative for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff aimed at supporting career progression and leadership opportunities, with funding from TAL Insurance, a national community partner of the RFDS.

Further validating the professional expertise our employees bring to their specialist roles, we were successfully reaccredited against the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards, the benchmark national requirement for clinical governance and delivering comprehensive care to all patients.

We also received recertification against ISO 14001, ISO 9001, ISO 45001 and AS 9110C, highly regarded international environmental, aviation, quality management, and health and safety standards, demonstrating our commitment to performance and environmental sustainability across all aspects of our organisation.

I would like to acknowledge our key partners in the Commonwealth Government South Australian Government, SA Ambulance Service, Northern Territory Government, St John Ambulance NT, Country SA Primary Health Network, NT Primary Health Network, Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

We are proud to share a vision towards improving health outcomes for rural and remote communities with such organisations.

I would also like to thank our Chair Peter de Cure AM and the Board for their leadership and acknowledge the Executive Leadership Team's commendable efforts in guiding our workforce with such certainty in a complex health environment.

This year, we have been sincerely overwhelmed by the extent of community support from corporate partners, fundraisers and our *Ground Crew* – Auxiliaries, Support Groups and individual donors.

We remain indebted to you for your support – it's only together with your help that we continue to be a lifeline for people throughout the central corridor of Australia.



Tong Varet

Tony Vaughan ASI
Chief Executive

Record 10,500+ aeromedical evacuations Launched first Virtual Emergency Centre in outback SA Announced integrated primary health and education centre for Port Augusta Inaugural graduates of aeromedical degree co-developed with Charles Darwin

Reaccreditation to National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards

Record \$18 million generated from fundraising and

Raised \$425,000 in under 24 hours through inaugural Giving Day Awarded
Australia's Most
Reputable Charity
for the 12th time
(Reptrak)

Inaugural
RFDS SA/NT
Values Awards
recognising staf

Awarded
Rural/Remote
Health Innovator
of the Year

RFDS Mental Health & Wellbeing Clinician Hannah West with local school students | Willowra NT

OUR SERVICES >

We understand the health challenges faced by rural and remote Australians, and strive to advocate and provide evidence-based, accredited models of emergency and community health care to these communities.



Aeromedical Evacuations >

Integrated 24/7 aeromedical evacuation and coordination service spanning outback patient retrievals to inter-hospital transfers of patients from country hospitals to major metropolitan hospitals.



Long-Haul Medi-Jet >

Long-haul (interstate) transfers of critically-ill patients between major hospitals using the world's first purpose-built aeromedical jet, the RFDS PC-24.



Community Health Clinics >

Regular 'fly-in' health clinics delivered by a multi-disciplinary clinical team of Rural Generalists, Registered Nurses and Allied Health Professionals with specialties in chronic disease, child and maternal health, midwifery, Aboriginal health, dietetics, mental health, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and podiatry.



Remote Area Clinics >

Remote Area Nurses providing in-clinic primary health care, home visits, referrals, 24/7 medical consultation and 4WD emergency ambulance services to residents and tourists in outback communities.



Telehealth & Digital Health >

Rural Generalists, Registered Nurses, Allied Health and Mental Health Clinicians providing remote scheduled and 24/7 emergency consultations to people living, working or travelling in rural and remote areas.



Medical Chests >

Provision and administration of Medical Chests and Automated External Defibrillators to isolated individuals, communities and businesses in conjunction with 24/7 on-call emergency telehealth and digital services.



Oral Health >

Dentists, Dental Hygienists and Remote Oral Health Assistants delivering a complete suite of preventative, early intervention and treatment services ranging from simple check-ups, x-rays and hygiene services through to restorations, extractions and continued roll-out of endodontic (root canal) treatment.



Immunisations >

Delivery of public health immunisation programs, including child and maternal health, targeted 'high risk' adult and disease outbreak campaigns such as COVID-19.



Mental Health & Wellbeing >

Psychologists, Mental Health Nurses, Social Workers and Community Liaison Officers working under a stepped model of care to provide culturally appropriate mental health services to isolated communities.



Aboriginal Health >

Providing advice and advocacy for Aboriginal patients from remote areas during their treatment in hospital or within their own community, including support to navigate social and health systems and language/cultural barriers.



Road Patient Transport Service >

Purpose-built RFDS ambulances and a team of Patient Transport Officers and Paramedics supporting the repatriation of patients and ambulance transport requests from public and private health service organisations.



Health Promotion >

Community engagement to build awareness and understanding of chronic disease, cancer self-screening, diet and nutrition, exercise and mental health and wellbeing.



Emergency Training >

Provision of emergency medical skills training for service delivery partners as well as First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training for people living and working in rural and remote communities.



Professional Placements >

Workplace placements in partnership with professional institutions such as the RACGP GP Registrar Program, as well as short-term placements for medical and nursing students to encourage and attract the future workforce to rural and remote medicine.



Patient Transfer Facilities >

State-of-the-art medical facilities based at regional and remote airfields that enable crews to treat and stabilise patients in a safe and secure setting, equipped with medical provisions.



Passenger Transport Operations >

Reliable transport of service delivery partners, external health professionals and essential medical goods to outback communities.



OUR ACTIVITY 2023/24 >

Every 10 minutes, your Flying Doctor delivers the finest care to someone living, working or travelling in rural and remote South Australia and the Northern Territory.



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OUR FOOTPRINT 2023/24 >

Top interstate landing locations >

a (Giles)	Katukatjara (Docker River)	
	Uturu Uturu Uturu Ourtin Springs Mutigulu Mutigulu	
	Mulgera (miney)	
ackstone Range	Murputja - Nyapari Anta Pukatja Alka Seltzer Bore Pajayatjara Alka Seltzer Bore Katija Katija	
	Mimil (Everard Park)	
	Maria ••••	
	Todmorden • Oodnadatta	ta
	Jameson	







- Remote Oral Health Clinics
 Wellbeing & Mental Health Clinics
 Facilitated Health Clinics
 First Aid Training Program

Aeromedical Bases & Patient Transfer Facilities Remote Area Nurse Clinics Aeromedical Evacuations GP/Primary Health Clinics

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Scan to see our live flight map.



Fop 20 landing locations* >

OUR SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS 2023/24 >

William Creek pioneers Virtual Emergency Centre >

This year, the RFDS opened a state-of-the-art health hub in the South Australian outback tourism town of William Creek that provides 24/7 emergency medical care with no health professionals physically in the room.

In the event of a medical emergency, an intercom on the side of the building enables community members and tourists passing along the Oodnadatta Track to contact the RFDS and access the Virtual Emergency Centre at all times of day and night.

The Virtual Emergency Centre houses innovative digital health technology, including a telehealth unit with video conferencing and a comprehensive range of interchangeable diagnostic medical devices, connecting patients and their companions with an immediate RFDS Doctor consultation and essential first responder advice.

With an on-site AED and remote RFDS Medical Chest, the on-call RFDS Doctor can advise the local medical chest custodian of immediate life-saving medications and care, while patients wait in a safe and secure treatment room for an RFDS aeromedical crew to arrive.

Ultimately, the new centre facilitates the Chain of Survival and links patients who are hundreds of kilometres from help with immediate hospital-grade medical treatment.

The Virtual Emergency Centre has already aided a number of outback travellers – some who were able to be diagnosed and continue on their journey and others retrieved by the RFDS.

As the closest town to Lake Eyre North and the gateway to the Simpson Desert, William Creek is a hub for nearby station communities and welcomes more than 26,000 tourists a year travelling the Oodnadatta Track.

In addition to emergency care, the new RFDS William Creek Community Health Service provides a multi-functional patient care space for the RFDS to conduct its fortnightly fly-in community health clinics, while increasing capability to introduce oral health and other allied health services to the town.

South Australia's Outback Communities Authority (OCA), through the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, kickstarted the project with a \$1 million funding injection matched by RFDS fundraising to offset the total cost.



Scan to watch the Virtual Emergency Centre in action.



OUR SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS 2023/24 >

Enhancing airside care, rain, hail or shine >

The RFDS joined South Australia's Riverland community in late 2023 to mark the official opening of the region's first Patient Transfer Facility (PTF).

The PTF enables RFDS and SA Ambulance Service crews to treat and stabilise patients in an undercover, climate-controlled environment, which is especially important for night transfers and on days when temperatures are in the 40s.

Previously, local patients requiring stabilisation were cared for on the tarmac. This dedicated facility sets new standards in patient care and operational response times for critical patients, while improving comfort levels for all patients, crews and service delivery partners.

The \$650,000 facility was fully funded by the RFDS through community fundraising, new and existing donors, and the support of the local business community.

The second of its kind in South Australia, the Riverland PTF has so far assisted with more than 500 patient transfers and follows the successful establishment of a similar RFDS facility in Mount Gambier in 2019.



600 patients

'Healthy Kungkas': Catching cancer early >

Promoting early detection of cancer was at the heart of the RFDS's inaugural Aboriginal women's health and wellbeing camp held in May 2024.

Across three days, local Aboriginal women welcomed the RFDS Primary Health Care Team on Country in Oodnadatta, Far North SA, to exchange cultural and clinical knowledge, yarning about what it means to be healthy kungkas (women) and lead healthy and happy lives.

The women took the RFDS on an adventure in their backyard, teaching the team traditional cooking, painting and weaving. while the RFDS facilitated bowel screenings, cervical screenings and breast checks.

The motivator behind hosting the camp was to create a safe space to break down 'shame', a deeply embedded cultural construct in Aboriginal communities, while removing the barrier of driving hours to a health service in Port Augusta.

Early detection of chronic disease is essential in closing the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians.

Of the 12 women who attended the camp, the RFDS collected six bowel screening tests, and is hopeful to collect more through regular fly-in clinics and future camp models.

The camp was supported by Preventive Health SA, Aboriginal Community Services, as well as local businesses that kindly donated self-care products.

A lifeline for outback towns >

In the opal mining town of Andamooka in Far North SA, the RFDS is a lifeline for the remote community.

Despite being an isolated outback town, Andamooka is served by a permanent RFDS Community Health Service, which provides nursing services such as regular health checks and 24/7 on-call emergency support from the centre of town.

Additionally, the nursing team goes above and beyond to facilitate regular health promotions, such as men's health and mental health sessions.

The clinic also supports the RFDS's regular fly-in primary healthcare services, meaning the community has access to Rural Generalists, specialist nurses, mental health, oral health, physiotherapy and other allied health programs on a regular basis.

In 2023/24, our teams in Andamooka delivered more than 1,500 episodes of care.

Andamooka is one of four permanent 24/7 RFDS Community Health Clinics in outback South Australia with Marla, Maree and Innamincka facilities also serving the local community, surrounding pastoral stations, freighters and travellers. Often the first responders when emergency strikes, these clinics are the ultimate safeguard for these vital service towns.





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OUR SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS 2023/24 >



In the air and on the road >

Over the last two years, the RFDS has expanded its Road Ambulance Service as part of its ongoing commitment to support the South Australian health system.

The RFDS launched its Road Ambulance Service out of Adelaide in late 2021 and today, the team transfers more than 500 patients a year – from Clare Valley to the Riverland and South East regions of South Australia.

With an on-call roster of 30 paramedics and patient transport officers, the team supports and responds to low-acuity ambulance transport requests from public and private health service organisations.

Transporting patients from hospital to homes, aged care facilities and respite centres assists in creating more capacity in the health system for ambulance crews to attend life-threatening emergencies. It means fewer delays for patients, especially those who need assistance getting home to a regional or rural town following a major hospital stay.

The RFDS team has also provided medical support to an array of national and local events, including the Tour Down Under, A-League football matches and the Adelaide Fringe's Kulilaya Festival in the remote Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands.

Whether it is care in the air or on the road, the Road Ambulance Service continues to grow and is another example of the Flying Doctor's desire to contribute more broadly to the health system in South Australia.



Patients, not the paper >

This year, the RFDS celebrated the first anniversary of our bespoke *Electronic Health Record* (EHR).

The EHR has enhanced the quality of medical documentation, clinical governance, data analytics, patient handover and in-flight clinical care, while achieving certification with the Australian Digital Health Agency's My Health Record Notice of Connection.

First launched in SA/NT in March 2023, and subsequently across the RFDS's South Eastern and Queensland Sections, the national 'digital medical bag' eliminates the risks associated with manual patient data handovers by making real-time data available to all clinicians involved in a patient's journey – in the air and on the ground.

Since inception, the RFDS has processed more than 18,000 electronic patient submissions through the EHR in South Australia and the Northern Territory, in turn saving the equivalent of 54,000 pages of paper as well as weeks' worth of manual data entry and record management.

The EHR future roadmap is focused on continuous improvement, expanding interoperability, and embracing advancements in emerging technology to aid in digitally capturing data at the point of care to support life-saving interventions and enrich the patient experience.

Yarning with the 'Flying Doctor mob' >

All year round, the RFDS Mental Health & Wellbeing Team based in Alice Springs hits the road and the sky to visit Central Desert communities and pastoral stations, offering one-on-one support, running group activities and spreading awareness.

Historically, remote communities like Willowra, located on Warlpiri Country more than 400 kilometres north of Alice Springs, have had little to no access to mental health outreach services.

Willowra has anywhere between 400 to 500 people based in community at any one time with around 30 students attending the local school each day.

While Willowra has a strong sense of community, it is isolated. Up until late 2022, there was no mobile phone reception, ruling out telehealth and online counselling support.

Today, the Flying Doctor team visits Willowra regularly, staying in community for days at a time.

Together with the school staff, the RFDS participates in 'nights in' for senior students, facilitating a safe space to discuss mental health, relationships and personal safety, as well as one-on-one counselling. For younger children, the RFDS runs small groups sessions around behaviour management, emotional regulation, and recognising feelings.

Connecting with the school has opened opportunities for broader mental health consultations with families, community members, local workers and teachers themselves.

In the past 12 months, the RFDS has delivered 800 mental health consultations across communities in South Australia and the Northern Territory.



After visiting the RFDS Darwin Tourist Facility for the first time, Mitchell Stennett became enamoured of stories of the Flying Doctor and the Bombing of Darwin.

At the time, the then 19-year-old had just finished school and was a client of WISE Employment, a Disability Employment Services provider.

Drawn to the history and interactive displays, Mitchell was eager to learn more about how he could get involved and, shortly after the visit, the RFDS supported Mitchell to join the team as a part-time Customer Service Assistant and he has never looked back.

Once a week, he proudly dons his RFDS badge and uniform, supporting the team with a range of tasks from labelling, stocktake, cleaning and engaging with the many visitors that come through the doors.

Today, he's found his niche – working in the gift shop helping tourists pick out and purchase their cherished Flying Doctor memorabilia at the end of tours.

The RFDS Darwin and Alice Springs Tourist Facilities welcomed more than 65,000 people through the doors in the last 12 months.





OUR PATIENT STORIES >

Our patients and communities are at the very heart of everything we do. Learn more about how the Flying Doctor is caring for Australians, from the ground up



To Ash, it's the ability get back to work on his outback station.

During a morning muster, an unforgiving dirt track sent remote SA station owner Ash Williams flying from his motorbike, knocking him unconscious.

He spotted his battered motorbike in nearby scrub, yet the damage to his own body remained a mystery.

Ash couldn't help but wonder how bad things were. But before long, an unmistakable sound cut through the angst – an RFDS PC-12 aircraft

"The timeframe from my accident to being in a hospital bed was amazing - we've gone from the middle of the outback to the Royal Adelaide Hospital in a few hours."



To Sonia, it's care when you least expect it.

An experienced paramedic, Sonia Strong is used to being in the back of an ambulance, helping others.

Last year, she was involved at the scene of a high-speed motorcycle crash on the Oodnadatta Track, a very long way from anywhere. Only this time, she was the patient

"I was worried about my spine. I could move everything, but I'd just landed on my head at 90km/h."



To Sandy, it's getting her life back.

When Sandy Abley slipped on the stairs of her outback home, it could well have been an everyday stumble. But the fall resulted in leg injuries that doctors later compared to the scene of a car accident.

Sandy was home alone in the small town of Ti Tree in the NT, more than 200 kilometres from the nearest major hospital. Her local health clinic provided a first response before she was emergency airlifted by the RFDS to Alice Springs.

Dealing with debilitating post-traumatic stress disorder from the accident, Sandy was then referred to the RFDS Mental Health & Wellbeing team, who walked alongside her as she embarked on a journey of healing.

"The injury changed my life and made me look at things a lot differently. But it also took me to a terrible place with my mental health... I'd never felt so low in my life."



To Richard and Colleen, it's the familiar face who saved her, twice.

Richard Elliott thought he'd lost the love of his life when his partner Colleen's heart stopped not once, but twice in the middle of the night... in the middle of the outback. Despite being in an isolated town, fortunately Richard could call on the nearby RFDS Andamooka Community Health Clinic.

With time of the essence, the RFDS team went to work, bringing Colleen back from the brink.

"I called the RFDS and it hit me that it was really bad when Colleen started saying her goodbyes... I went straight to give mouth-to-mouth but I couldn't because she was so rigid."



To Amy, it's a security blanket.

At 23, Amy Kynoch is living her dream, working as a station hand in outback NT.

Life at the remote Lucy Creek Station, 400 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs, contains everything she loves, from the people and lifestyle to working with animals.

During cattle mustering season last year, Amy started her morning like any other, not imagining by day's end she would be in the back of an RFDS aircraft bound for hospital.

But this became a reality when she copped a kick from a flying hoof, leaving her with a split and bloodied face.

"The next bit I remember was waking up in the car being driven back to the homestead. I was in a lot of pain - my head and eye were throbbing."



To Annemarie and Luke, it's the reason they can protect Australia's native fauna and flora.

Annemarie van Doorn and Luke Playford manage the whopping 1.7-millionacre Kalamurina Wildlife Sanctuary at the intersection of Australia's three central deserts, which remains a stronghold for threatened wildlife.

Located more than 900 kilometres north of Adelaide, with an annual average rainfall of less than 170 millimetres and temperatures regularly exceeding 45 degrees, it's no secret that life can be challenging.

Being hundreds of kilometres from a clinic or pharmacy, the team relies on regular fly-in health services to stay on the land and carry out their vital work.

"Without the RFDS, I would have to take a day and a half each way to drive to Adelaide. When you're really sick, that's the last thing you want to do."



Scan or visit finestcare.com.au to meet our patients and watch their stories.

OUR PEOPLE >

Medical Practitioners	2	26
Flight Nurses	14	77
Pilots	52	2
Engineering	34	1
Primary Health Nurses	6	19
Primary & Allied Health Workers	3	1
Mental Health Clinicians	7	3
Oral Health	3	18
Patient Transport Officers	3	14
Paramedics		12
Operations Communications Centre	15	2
Tourist Facilities	4	12
Executive Managers	8	2
Managers	15	2
Operational Support & Administration	18	11
Finance	6	4
People & Culture	14	2
П	10	1
Marketing & Stakeholder Relations	5	
Fundraising	9	
Total Staff	228	209

Cheryl Hewitt, Cleaner

Andrew Smith, Pilot

Amanda Bell, Database Administrator

Damien Heath, Head of Flight Operations

Angelique Galea, Flight Nurse/Base Clinical Educator

The late Carol Illmayer, Flight Nurse

Karen Schell, Flight Nurse

Tony Vaughan ASM, Chief Executive

Nerida Atkins, Tourist Facility Coordinator

Steve Cameron, Executive General Manager,

Operations, Logistics & Performance

Alex Clarke, Flight Nurse

Maddison Conder, Flight Operations Administration Assistant

Dr Vaibhav Garg, Senior Dentist & Manager Oral Health Program

Natalie Szabo, Executive General Manager, Primary Care & Clinical Safety/Quality

Matt Wedge, Pilot

RFDS launched its Values Awards this year to coincide with National Employee Appreciation Day, to celebrate individuals and teams who have gone to exceptional lengths in demonstrating the organisation's underpinning values.

In the inaugural year, the organisation received more than 100 internal nominations aligned to the RFDS values: Care, Integrity, Collaboration, and Innovation.

Mandy Smallacombe, Manager Primary Health Care

Care Award (patient facing)

For demonstrating care for our patients, people, stakeholders, communities, and the work we do.

Dave Rose, Cleaner - Engineering

Care Award (non-patient facing)

For demonstrating care for our patients, people, stakeholders,

communities, and the work we do.

Jack King, Remote Area Nurse

Integrity Award

For delivering safe, high-quality services through demonstrating trust, honesty and respect.

Mim Johnston, Organisational Development & Learning Specialist

For listening, sharing and communicating as one team to

deliver great outcomes. Kogo Fujiki-Mayo, Content Specialist

Innovation Award

For embracing change and striving to provide industry-leading solutions.

Brannan Clarke, Apprentice Aircraft Maintenance Engineer

Chief Executive's Award

For displaying the values of care, integrity, collaboration and innovation while supporting healthier and happier Australians no matter where they live, work or play.

Operations Communication Centre Team

Purpose Award

For supporting healthier and happier Australians no matter where they live, work or play.

Dr Ishani Kaluthotage

Rural Registrar of the Year 2023 RACGP Rural Awards

Mandy Smallacombe

Finalist, Excellence in Leadership - Emerging Leader 2024 SA Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards

Oral Health Team

Finalist, Primary Health Care Team of the Year 2023 NT Primary Health Network Awards



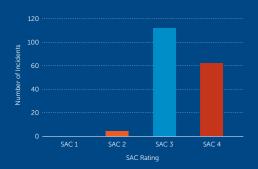
OUR PATIENT SAFETY & ENGAGEMENT >

Clinical Safety and Quality >

Patient Safety Report >

Effective internal incident reporting and management is dependent on a workforce culture that empowers staff to report issues that may impact on patient safety. The Safety Assessment Code (SAC) assesses incidents at four levels. SAC 1 and 2 incidents indicate the level of actual harm caused to patients, while SAC 3 and 4 incidents indicate emerging trends, issues and opportunities for improvement. For a consecutive financial year period, no SAC 1 incidents were reported and the majority of incidents (63 per cent) were rated at SAC 3. Clinical incident reporting provides rich information that informs recommendations around how to continuously improve systems and processes and prevent similar incidents from reoccurring.

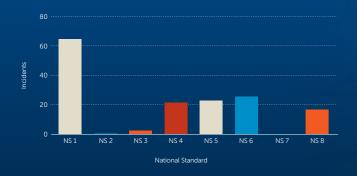
Incident reports 2023/24 >



Clinical incidents by National Standard >

Clinical incidents were themed to align with the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards, which informs improvement efforts in safety and quality. Clinical incidents are reported for all of the National Standards, while Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers is captured through the RFDS's Consumer Feedback Management system. In assessing the clinical incidents against the Standards, the top incident classifications were: Standard 1: Clinical Governance (34 per cent), Standard 6: Communicating for Safety (18 per cent), Standard 4: Medication Safety (14 per cent), and Standard 5: Comprehensive Care (14 per cent).

Clinical incidents by National Standard 2023/24 >



National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards reaccreditation >

In 2024, the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care awarded the RFDS full reaccreditation across all of our health and aeromedical services, under the NSQHS Standards. No recommendations were made for mitigation from the survey, and a special submission of merit was made to the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care for the RFDS's *Electronic Health Record* Project. This comprehensive result confirmed the integration of sound clinical governance across all clinical services within the organisation.

Unsolicited feedback 2023/24 >

The RFDS receives consumer feedback through both solicited and unsolicited methods, which is reported to RFDS Health Consumer Advisory Committee and the Board. In 2023/24 we received 49 unsolicited feedback submissions, of which 82 per cent were compliments, 4 per cent were general feedback and 18 per cent were opportunities for improvement. An 81-percent increase in feedback from the previous year is reflective of staff and community education, and system improvements facilitating more accurate and consistent capture of feedback.

18% Compliment General Opportunities for improvement

Continuous quality improvement >

The RFDS Clinical Audit Program underwent a comprehensive review with clinical service leads to ensure audits of clinical practices relevant to the NSQHS Standards were contextual and provided value. Across the clinical services, 49 audits were scheduled and provided assurance of best practice as well as improvement opportunities for both the program and the services.

Audit results and improvement projects are reported to relevant service sub-committees to enable visibility, learning and accountability. Improvement actions were also assigned in 25 per cent of all reported clinical incidents, indicating both the identification of substantive corrective solutions and commitment to continuous quality improvement.

Partnering at the point of care >

An important measure for achieving our strategic focus to increase community involvement in partnered care involves meeting the requirements of NSQHS Standard 2: *Partnering with Consumers*, which encompasses healthcare provision that demonstrates respectful behaviours towards the patient, their family and carers, and can respond appropriately to the patient's needs, values and preferences when determining treatment plans and caregiving.

RFDS program development in this space has been deeply informed by the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights and processes that sustain the ability to understand and improve how the organisation's services are experienced by the people at the point of care.

Promoting awareness around healthcare rights, developing and activating accessible feedback pathways and creating culturally safe and diverse welcoming spaces are key projects that have been co-designed with patients and intended to operate as foundational systems.

'The Portable Waiting Room', which is a series of patient-facing promotional resources visible across laptops, tablets, notepads and other engagement tools, is one initiative that is part of these systems.

At the scan of a QR code during a health consult, patients can conveniently access information via the RFDS website about health services, healthcare rights and how to provide patient feedback. The resources are bold, colourful and employ plain language, with the aim of being accessible for patients of all ages, reading abilities and English-language levels.

The Portable Waiting Room continues to evolve, with more functionality to enhance the patience experience currently under development.

Building partnerships with patients at the point of care is crucial for the Flying Doctor to ensure its life-changing mission remains responsive, relevant, and tailored to the evolving healthcare needs of the people it serves.



Patient Experience Partner Hannah Allert consults with Arabana man Uncle Trevor Buzzacott OAM in his role as RFDS Health Consumer Advisory Committee Member.



28 ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE SOUTH AUSTRALIA & NORTHERN TERRITORY 29

OUR FUNDRAISING & PARTNERSHIPS >

Here is just some of the incredible community support and partnership collaboration the Flying Doctor experienced in 2023/24.















OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS >

Jet Partner

Aircraft Partner





Major Partners











National Partners













Community Partners































Supporting Partners

































Media Partners



OUR HEALTH PARTNERS >

We thank the following partners for working with and supporting the RFDS in 2023/24.

Funding Partners















Service Delivery Partners >

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Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation

Ashford Hospital

AusCycling

Bicycle SA

Calvary Health Care

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Central Australia Health Service

Central Australian Retrieval Service

Charles Darwin University

Country & Outback Health

Envista

Event Managers Australia

Eyre & Far North Local Health Network

Flinders University

GPex

headspace

Isolated Children's Parents' Association

Kakarrara Wilurrara Health Alliance

Medical Retrieval and Consultation Centre (MRaCC)

MedSTAR Emergency Medical Retrieval

Mutitjulu Community Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Ngaanyatjarra Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association

Oak Valley (Maralinga Tjarutja) Aboriginal Corporation

Office of the Chief Psychiatrist (SA)

Outback Communities Authority

Pintupi Homelands Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Remote & Isolated Children's Exercise (RICE)

SA Arid Lands Natural Resource Management Board

SA Dental

SA Prison Health Service

School of the Air Share the Dignity

South Australian Tourism Commission

Sports Australia

St Andrew's Hospital

St John Ambulance NT

Tullawon Health Service Inc

Umoona Tjutagku Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Urapuntja Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (Purple House)

Yorke and Northern Local Health Network

Skills Training Partners >

Advanced Maternal and Reproductive Education Australia

Advanced Paediatric Life Support Australia

Australian Resuscitation Training

Charles Darwin University

Edvoke Education Guardian Personal Security

Medical Retrieval and Consultation Centre (MRaCC)

Office of the Chief Psychiatrist

Riverland Academy of Clinical Excellence

Rural Doctors Workforce Agency SA Ambulance Service

Skilled Manual Handling

St John Ambulance NT

St John Ambulance SA

The University of Adelaide The University of Tasmania

Aviation Partners >

Adelaide Airport

Aerodrome Design Services

Airservices Australia Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Flight Safety International

NT Airports

NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning & Logistics OzRunways

Regional Aviation Association of Australia

AWARDS >

2024 Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award

2024 Australia's Most Reputable Charity (Reptrak)

2023 Australia's Most Trusted Charity (Reader's Digest)

2024 Rural/Remote Health Innovator of the Year (Rural Health Pro National Rural and Remote Health Awards)

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OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS >

Through the generosity of our corporate and community partners, donors, beguestors, volunteers and staff, \$18 million was raised in 2023/24 to help keep the Flying Doctor flying

Auxiliaries & Support Groups >
Adelaide Auxiliary
Ceduna Support Group
Clare Support Group
Copper Coast & District Support Group
Cowell & District Support Group
Fleurieu Support Group
Gawler & District Support Group
Jamestown & District Support Group
Kangaroo Island Support Group
Kimba & District Support Group
Kingston & District Support Group
Marree Support Group
Millicent & District Support Group
Mount Gambier Support Group
Naracoorte & District Support Group

Port Augusta Auxiliary Port Lincoln Auxiliary Port Pirie & District Support Group Riverland Support Group

Roxby Downs Auxiliary Southern Yorke Peninsula Support Group Sunraysia Support Group

Tatiara Support Group Whyalla Support Group

Volunteers >

Speaker Program Volunteers Simulator Volunteers Operational Volunteers Adelaide Office Volunteers 'Wings for Life' Gala Ball Volunteers Royal Adelaide Show Volunteers Knitting Volunteers

Meritorious Service Awards >

Christine Clissold Peter Bowley Sue Daniels

Ambassador >

Jessica Adamson

ng.
Community Fundraisers >
AANT
Adelaide Airport Ltd
Agribusiness Australia
Alice Springs Auxiliary
Anna Villa Ram Sale
ANZ Community Ball
Arthur Brinsley
Australian Agricultural Company
Australian Science & Mathematics School
Australian Stud Sheep Breeders Association
Balnaves of Coonawarra
Bay Op Shop
Beachport District Development Assoc Inc
Bendigo Bank Mount Gambier & District
Birkenhead Tavern
Border Village Roadhouse
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Calder Wealth Management
Carrieton Rodeo Club
Ceduna Hotel
Central Yorke School
Coles Group Edinburgh Parks
Delaware North
Don Hughes Recycling
Elders Rural Services - Naracoorte
Elders Rural Services - Peterborough
F45 Training Port Lincoln
Funkes Ram Sale
Gary & Christine Bastin
Glendambo District Sports Club
Gloria Bristow-Miell

Goolwa Meals on Wheels Volunteers

Gully Environment Network Inc

Kimberly-Clark Australia Pty Ltd Leigh Creek Outback Resort Lewis Bruhn Memorial Lincoln College Club Inc Lions Club of Robe & District Little Bags of Hope - Port Lincoln Lower Lakes Stockmans Challenge & Bush Festival Marree Classic Outback Tour

Millicent AH & P Show Society Millicent Bowls Club

Murray Bridge Bowling Club

Morphett Vale Memorial Bowling Club Mount Lofty Rangers 4WD Club

Graham Abbott

Hamilton College

Henley Woodworkers

Keith RFDS Op Shop

HiQA Geotechnical

Immanuel College Journey Beyond

Marree Hotel

Murray Bridge RFDS Hangar Op Shop
National Indigenous Australians Agency
Noonamah Tavern
North Blinman Hotel
North Moolooloo Golf Classic
Northline
Norwood Secondary College
NT City2Surf/ Athletics Northern Territory
Nullarbor Roadhouse Pty Ltd
Nuriootpa Hockey Club
Nutrien Agricultural Solutions - Port Augusta
Oodnadatta Racing & Horse Sports Inc
O'Shannessy's Quality Tours
OZ Bash Outback Odyssey
Paruna General Store
Petroleum Exploration Society of Australia
Port Augusta Racing Club
Port Broughton Uniting Church Opportunity Shop
Port Hughes Tavern
Port Lincoln Hotel
Port Victoria Hotel Motel
Queen Adelaide Club
Queen of Hearts - Run & Ride
Rabobank NQ-NT
RAOB (Buff Lodge)
Renmark Club
Renmark Rovers Football Club
River Murray Boat Owners Association
Rockleigh Uniting Church
Roxby Bakery
Royal Agricultural &
Horticultural Society of SA Inc
Simpson Desert Bike Challenge
South East Property Sales & Management
Southern Senior Citizens' Club Inc
Spencer Gulf Tourers
St Mark's College Charitable Foundation
Stealth Tools Pty Ltd
Stirling North Primary School
Strathalbyn Racing Club
Streaky Bay Tourism and Business Association Inc
SYP Community Shop Inc
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Team Cobber - Outback Car Trek
Telopea Park School
Unity Op Shop Port Lincoln
Viterra
Walk the Yorkes for Charity
Walkerville Primary School
Westminster School
William Creek Gymkhana Committee
William Creek Hotel
The Windmill Repairers Association of SA
Wolseley RSL and Community Club
Wudinna and Districts Business

and Tourism Association

Wunkar Football & Netball Club

WINGS FOR LIFE 2024 >

The sold-out 'Wings For Life' Gala Ball at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre on 18 May was the hottest ticket in town, with 1,000 guests joining the wild festival that was the GALAPALOOZA edition.

Thank you to MC Jess Adamson, entertainment acts Hans, The Killer Queen Experience, DJ Wipod and artist Mimby Jones Robinson, event and corporate sponsors, volunteers and prize donors.

An incredible \$255,000 was raised on the night, which will directly benefit the RFDS's capital-raising program for the purchase and replacement of 'flying intensive units' so that we can continue to provide the finest care to the furthest corner.

Major Sponsors

S. Kidman & Co, Beach Energy, Heathgate, Iluka Resources, Ahrens, MGA Whittles Group of Companies

Major Donors

Edible Blooms

Aircraft Partner

Pilatus Aircraft Ltd

Supporting Sponsors

Elders, Peter Kittle Motor Company, BHP, Novatech, WDM, DogRidge, LION









How you can help >

Help us continue to deliver the finest care to the furthest corner of Australia.

- Mail your donation to: Royal Flying Doctor Service PO Box 381 Marleston SA 5033
- > Call us on 1800 813 318
- > Email us at enquiries@flyingdoctor.net
- 🖵 flyingdoctor.org.au/sant
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Visit **flyingdoctor.org.au/sant** to make an online donation

Where to find us >

Adelaide Base

- 1 Tower Road, Adelaide Airport SA 5950
- t 08 8238 3333
- e enquiries@flyingdoctor.net

Alice Springs Base

28 Davis Drive, Alice Springs NT 0870 t 08 8958 8400

Darwin Base

10a Lancaster Road, Eaton NT 0820 t 08 8998 9940

Port Augusta Base

Airport Road, Port Augusta SA 5700 **t** 08 8648 9500

Andamooka Health Service

Hospital Road, Andamooka SA 5722 **t** 08 8672 7087

Innamincka Health Service

Browne Street, Innamincka SA 5731 **t** 08 8080 3790

Marla Health Service

8 Cockatoo Crescent, Marla SA 5274 **t** 08 8670 7007

Marree Health Service

First Street, Marree SA 5733 **t** 08 8675 8345

Alice Springs Tourist Facility

8-10 Stuart Terrace, Alice Springs NT 0870 **t** 08 8958 8411 **w** rfdsalicesprings.com.au

Darwin Tourist Facility

39 Stokes Hill Road, Darwin NT 0800 t 08 8983 5700 w rfdsdarwin.com.au



The RFDS acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the Traditional Custodians of the land. The RFDS is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health care. We embrace diversity and welcome all people irrespective of faith, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity.