



Royal Flying Doctor Service  
SOUTH EASTERN SECTION

# Year **in** review

## 2020/21



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Front cover artwork: By the artist Wiradjuri Woman, Trudy Sloane. The artwork depicts the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) as the hub with the circling birds our aircraft that fly into and out of communities. The snake-link figures represent the rivers, and the colours represent our organisation and the landscape we live and work on.

# Three decades of service to bush communities

As a kid from the country, the chance to work for the Flying Doctor was a dream come true for Steven Dounton. Thirty years on, he still thinks he's got the best job in Australia.



Steven was working as a midwife at the Queen Victoria Hospital in Adelaide in 1987 when the opportunity to join the Flying Doctor came up. He says he jumped at the chance.

***“The Royal Flying Doctor Service is an icon, and I loved the idea of flying around and working for an organisation that I respected.”***

***“Growing up in a small town in the Flinders Ranges, you always knew about the Flying Doctor, but it wasn't till I started working for them that I realised how much they were valued in remote areas.”***

Steven has held several positions during his long career with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, including Senior Flight Nurse. In that time, he has also seen the organisation go through some big changes.

***“When I started out, we flew in unpressurised aircraft with no GPS or telephones. There was just a doctor, a flight nurse and a pilot and that was pretty much it. There was no HR person or anything like that.”***

***“The organisation is a lot bigger now. There is much more support behind us, which is great.”***

Steven now works as a Remote Area Nurse at the new clinic in Innamincka, with fellow staff members Chris Belshaw and

Robyn Churcher. His shifts are two weeks on, two weeks off on a fly-in-fly-out basis. Steven says bush nursing suits him down to the ground.

***“I love the outback and the people out here. And I love the fact that every day is different. Some days you might be caring for someone who's been involved in an accident on their station. Other times you're helping a tourist who got lost and dehydrated. It's never dull.”***

Steven's role involves visiting people in their homes and facilitating the weekly doctor's clinic. He is also available around the clock in case of medical emergencies. He says the work has allowed him to form close bonds with locals.

***“You get to know the residents and the station owners really well out here. It's a lot more community-based, which I love.”***

Steven says working in Innamincka has been a powerful reminder of the critical role the Flying Doctor plays in outback Australia.

***“For anyone who's had a loved one flown out in an emergency, there's nothing like seeing the Flying Doctor plane land. If we're not out here, there's no one to help the people in the bush.”***



# Our Mission, Values and Strategic Approach

## **Our Mission**

Improved access supporting better health outcomes to remote, rural, and regional communities.

## **Our Statement**

The furthest corner. The finest care.

## **Our Strategy**

Community, Healthcare, Service, Funding, Innovation, People and Stakeholders.

## **Our Values**

Reliability, Trust, Care and Safety.

Every week, thousands of people living, travelling and working in rural and remote areas of Australia face unexpected and life-threatening medical emergencies and health challenges.

For those living in some of the most remote areas of New South Wales, the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) is their safety net – providing the highest quality life-saving emergency care and healthcare services when and where they need it throughout all stages of life.

Research shows that people living in rural, regional and remote parts of Australia have much poorer health outcomes than people living in metropolitan areas. This is particularly true when it comes to medical emergencies, chronic disease and mental health. Healthcare services are often hours away meaning people in remote areas have limited access to the care they need.

Without the Flying Doctor and the myriad of vital healthcare services we provide, the health and wellbeing of individuals living in the outback would be poorer and lives would be at risk.

Since 1936, the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) has delivered healthcare services in the NSW outback, continually evolving to meet the complex and changing needs of its patients and their communities.

Today, emergency medical retrievals remain at the heart of our service, along with an ever-expanding range of primary health services including GP clinics, dental care and mental health support. This year — in response to the COVID-19 pandemic — we have operated respiratory clinics and developed a vaccination roll-out program that will ensure the safety of the communities we serve.

As we head towards a century of providing care in the outback, we recognise that the challenges that come with living in rural and remote communities are not diminishing. Isolation, fewer job opportunities, limited access to educational opportunities and the impact of drought and bushfires has a profound effect on the health and wellbeing of those living and working in the outback. It is our goal to deliver high-quality healthcare services that meet community needs and improve the health outcomes of all those in rural and remote areas.

## Our Values defined

Our Values of Reliability, Trust, Care and Safety have long guided the way we do our work, and the commitments we make to our patients, communities, stakeholders and each other. No matter the role or location, our employees strive to bring these values to life in the work they do every day.

## Our strategic approach

While emergency retrieval continues to be the vital core to our work, and a perennially important service to isolated communities, the health service offering of the Flying Doctor continues to expand and diversify to meet the growing and changing needs of our users across the network. Today, the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) is far more than the emergency aeromedical service of its origins. Working independently, or in partnership with other health services, we now support the health and wellbeing of people in our communities throughout their entire life.

Our services also include mobile dental services, primary health clinics in towns and remote communities, telehealth consultations with doctors, non-emergency patient transport services, face-to-face and phone-based mental health consultations and counselling, respiratory clinics for COVID-19 testing and vaccination and a range of alcohol and other drug services. Our range of services are delivered with a commitment to providing the highest quality care.

The training of clinicians from outside the Flying Doctor and allied health professionals is a growing area of service provision for us, providing a foundation for stronger health service delivery in rural and remote areas by sharing skills and expertise.

Commonwealth and state government funding and contracts support a significant proportion of our services, but it remains true that our generous supporters, including regular giving donors, community support groups, partners and philanthropists, provide a vital and much-needed contribution to our programs and services. Combined, these funding sources not only allow us to continue to deliver our health services, but provide the opportunity to grow and evolve to meet the future needs of the outback regions we serve.

# A message from the **President** and **CEO**



**Mr Alexander Scamps**  
President



**Mr Greg Sam**  
Chief Executive Officer

The story of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) through 2020/21 has once again been one of resilience and adaptability framed by the ongoing unpredictability of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In many respects, the challenges have presented opportunities for the service to strengthen and adapt, meeting the changing needs of our patients and communities in ways that, pleasingly, build foundations for sustainable future growth.

At the same time, the delivery of the strategic plan has continued with positive momentum, and while the delivery of quality healthcare has always been the core work of our organisation, throughout the year the structure of our service has been fortified around a Health Service Model that puts patient care and community healthcare needs, both now and into the future, at the centre of our service. This frames our workforce planning, operational structure and investments in services and programs, all geared toward making the health needs across our network central to our planning.

More than any other year, 2020/21 demanded that we balance responsive healthcare with a determination to continue the strategic work of building the future of our service.

## The South Eastern Section: responding to need

No matter the medical emergency, we continue to be a trusted ally to those living, working and travelling in remote areas when people call on the Flying Doctor in their time of need. The true spirit of the Reverend John Flynn's 'mantle of safety' is enduringly present in our life-saving emergency retrieval work and remains core to our work alongside our growing primary care, dental, mental health and alcohol and other drug services.

Emergency retrievals and transport services continue to provide the highest level of care, as quickly as possible, wherever it is most needed, and then to transport people safely and quickly when that is the best response to their care. In the context of COVID-19 this has meant an additional layer of preparedness and the continuation of strict and responsive safety protocols. As a precaution, our teams were required to treat many patient cases as COVID-positive in addition to adhering to the new policies and procedures regarding the donning and doffing of personal protective equipment that were introduced early in 2020, when the pandemic emerged.

Continuing the work of the previous year, our Wellbeing Places in Dubbo, Broken Hill and Lightning Ridge became fully operational, offering a broad range of complementary services promoting good mental health and the wellbeing which supports it. A positive resource for all ages, our Wellbeing Places offer counselling, therapy and a variety of complementary programs, including play therapy, yoga, meditation practice, group workshops, a 'shed' for skills building, each designed to proactively support the general wellbeing and interpersonal connection that underpins mental health.

During the year, we celebrated the official launches of our remote clinics at Louth, Tilpa and Innamincka. These superb new clinical facilities were made possible through the support of a generous donor. The remote communities of these regions, as well as the many people who travel through

## South Eastern Section board

Left to right: Mr Alexander Scamps (President), Mrs Elaine (Ruth) Sandow (Vice President), Mr Anthony (Tony) MacRae (Treasurer), Mr Terence (Terry) Clark (retired 27/10/2020), Dr Saranne Cooke, Ms Elizabeth Johnstone, Professor David Lyle, Mrs Sanchia Treloar, Mrs Joan Treweeke OAM, Ms Brooke Curtin (Associate Director, retired 22/02/2021).



them, will now have quality, modern facilities at hand—a tremendous leap forward for all. We have heard how thankful these towns are for these facilities, and we want to extend our thanks to the kind individual who helped us realise this vision, as well as the clinic coordinators and clinical employees who turn these facilities into friendly, functional and thriving medical practices.

Throughout the year we continued to expand our mobile services, in particular telehealth and mobile primary facilities. The physical presence of a doctor, nurse or clinician wasn't strictly necessary for people to receive the medical or mental help they needed. Our aim has been to find ways to rapidly position medical expertise and care where it is needed, and to overcome the obstacles that distance and travel restrictions may present.

While our primary and emergency services grew to meet demand, our work as a health service was necessarily defined by the challenges of COVID-19, just as it did in the year before. Our COVID response activities continued throughout the year in addition to our regular services, placing additional demands on our teams who rose admirably to the challenge.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) delivered respiratory clinics at our Broken Hill Base and through travelling clinics. We also delivered the COVID-19 vaccine to rural and remote regions. The vaccination program is ongoing and runs in addition to our regular primary health GP clinics to ensure communities across our section can access both doses of the Pfizer vaccine. Running these programs in addition to our regular services added many more dates to the clinical roster and increased the workload for our teams and volunteers considerably. We would like to acknowledge the efforts and dedication of our frontline teams, and clinic coordinators who made this federally funded initiative possible without compromise, ensuring access to both regular primary care services and the vaccine or testing throughout the year.

Cognisant that responding to the current challenges of the pandemic is an ongoing imperative for the service, we remain engaged in the work of building our health service for the future. In 2020/21 we put our resolute commitment to building our organisation through a Health Service Model into action, shaping the structure of our workforce and operations to strengthen this proposition. Uncompromising in our focus on patient care and a quality and safety framework, the structure features a Health Service Manager position to lead our operational activities from both our Broken Hill and Dubbo Bases and the launch of our 24/7 Operations Centre to ensure agile, 'round the clock' delivery of our services across our network. Whilst located in Dubbo, the Centre controls the operations across the entirety of the South Eastern Section. With these changes came new demands on the team, and we observed an agile, adaptable quality in our people that demonstrates the changes are supported by a capable and focused workforce.

Throughout the year, we were often reminded of how integrated we are in a much larger and more complex healthcare picture, working alongside many other health service providers. The background to the year's work was the successful and positive collaboration across Royal Flying Doctor Service sections, and our collaborative partnerships with the Primary Healthcare Network, Local Health Departments and other local services. We want to recognise our partners and thank them for their trust and support.

## Building for the future

During the year, the Board Strategic Planning session brought the Board together to draw on insights from our regions on the health needs today and into the future, and to build on our existing strategic approach to health service delivery. A vital part of this is understanding the needs of our communities, anticipating what will be needed in the future and building the requisite capabilities in our operations, aviation fleet, workforce, quality and safety constructs, funding and contracted service opportunities.

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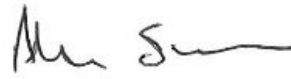
## Recognition

We'd like to thank our Patrons, Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC and Mr Dennis Wilson for their support of our organisation, and their advocacy for us. We were pleased to welcome them for a visit to our communities this year, and grateful for the opportunity to show them the work we do, and the wonderful people we do it with and for. Thank you for your ongoing patronage.

In this year when we celebrated 20 years of operations out of the Dubbo Base, we would also like to thank Terry Clark, retired President of the Dubbo Support Group and former member of our Board. Terry's contribution to the growth of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the Dubbo region has been exceptional, and we want to recognise the energy and loyalty he showed the service over many years, and his passionate advocacy for the Flying Doctor in the Dubbo region. Thank you, Terry.

## Our strength is in our people and the generous support we receive

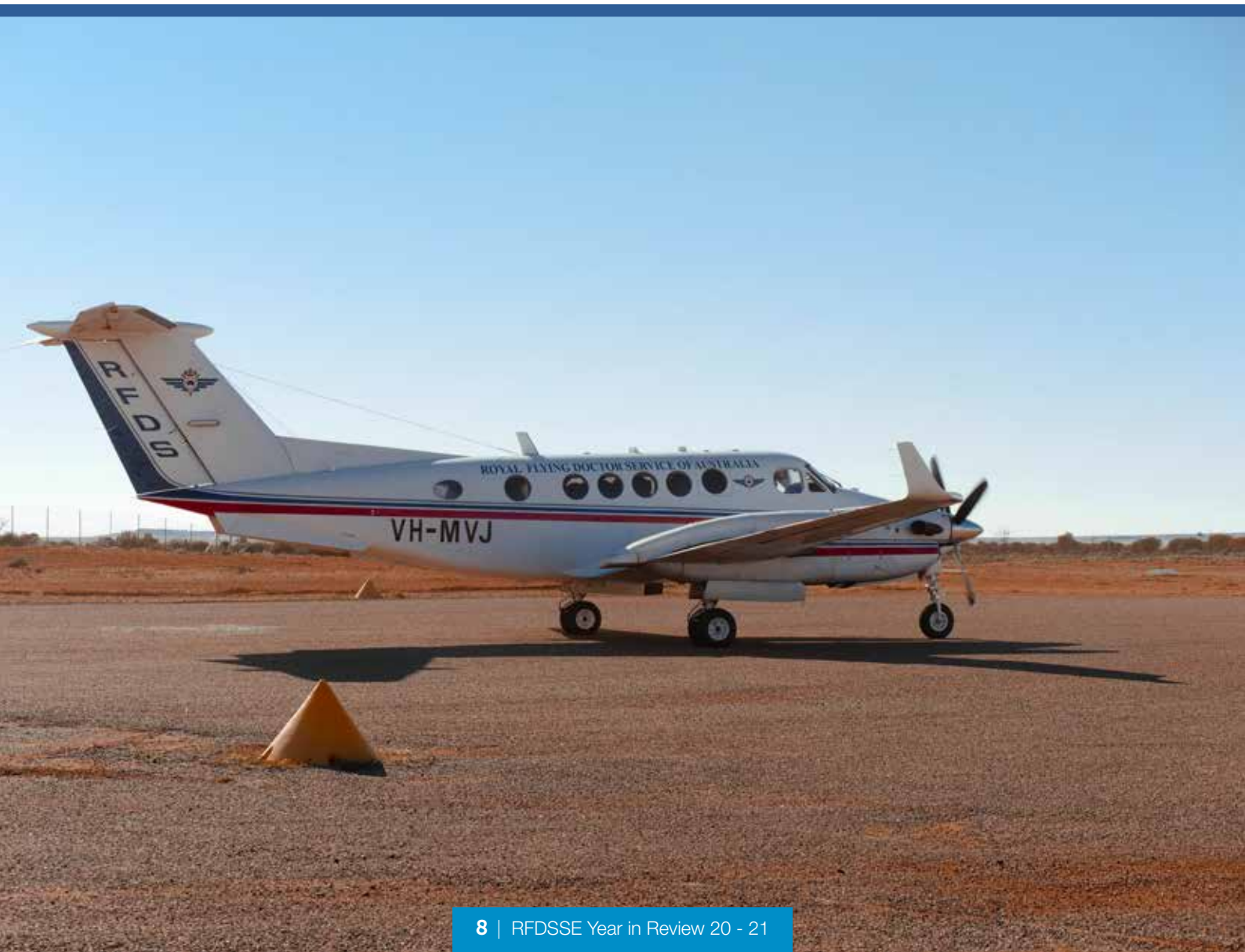
We owe a debt of gratitude to our large number of committed supporters of every kind. Our work simply isn't possible without the generous contribution of time, labour, funds, ideas and resources given to us by our loyal supporters. These include donors, volunteers, auxiliaries and support groups, fundraisers, our Board and our Patrons. Thank you. We also wish to thank our employees, who do their best every day to make the lives of Australians in remote regions better. Be they frontline teams with a real and direct life-saving impact, or our support teams who make their work possible, we thank you for your efforts.



Mr Alexander Scamps  
President,  
Royal Flying Doctor Service  
(South Eastern Section)



Mr Greg Sam  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Royal Flying Doctor Service  
(South Eastern Section)







GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
SYDNEY

Message from  
**Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC**  
**Governor of New South Wales**

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) emergency retrieval service has always been, and remains, a core service for the rural and remote communities it has supported since its founding in 1928.

Today, the delivery of primary health services, including GP, Mental Health and Dental clinics, has become equally important, providing continuous quality health care to rural and remote communities. Dennis and I discovered this when we made two separate, four-day visits to far western New South Wales, which included visits to two clinics, a NSW Health clinic in White Cliffs, supported by RFDS, and a RFDS clinic in Louth, both staffed by health teams on a fly-in-fly-out basis.

Seeing first-hand the operation of the very busy White Cliffs clinic, observing student nurses on placement conducting examinations and learning from staff about preparations for the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out provided us with a keen insight into the health needs of people in rural areas and the vital role that RFDS plays in the delivery of these services.

Our visit to the purpose-built Louth RFDS clinic, one of two new clinics in far western New South Wales, also highlighted the critical importance of primary health care being available close to home. Supported by dedicated local volunteers, the visiting health teams conduct monthly on-site health consultations, including maternal and baby health care, blood tests and other examinations, directed both to immediate health issues as well as longer term preventative health care.

A technologically sophisticated telehealth facility is incorporated into the new Louth clinic. This is an exciting development, with access to the facility and equipment able to be entirely managed remotely.

From our discussions with staff at both White Cliffs and Louth, over the most hospitable of morning and afternoon teas, it is obvious that both on-the-ground medical and telehealth consultations are vital to the physical and mental health of our rural and remote communities.

In our third year as Patrons, the adaptability of the Royal Flying Doctor Service has been demonstrated again during COVID-19, as it operates at the frontline of protective health to deliver respiratory and testing clinics and the ongoing vaccination program.

To everyone at Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern), thank you for being that literal 'lifeline' for the people and communities that need you.

**Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC**  
**Governor of New South Wales**

**Mr Dennis Wilson**

# Where we work

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) covers a vast area, stretching across New South Wales and our border areas. Communities in and travellers to these rural and remote parts of Australia are isolated and, without the Flying Doctor, would lack access to vital health services, including emergency medical care, primary healthcare and mental health support.

The communities we serve vary from single-family remote stations and tiny rural towns only accessible by plane to the larger regional centres of Dubbo and Broken Hill. Our patients are newborn babies, children, families, adults, Aboriginal communities, elderly people and travellers.





Our service reach >



Our aeromedical crews are on standby 24/7, 365 days a year.

**Key**

- Frequently visited primary (emergency) evacuation locations
- RFDS clinics including fly-in clinics, mobile dental clinics and alcohol and other drugs services
- Inter-hospital transfers including Air Ambulance locations
- RFDS Bases and healthcare facilities
- Rural Aerial Health Service
- Rural Women's GP Service clinics
- Contracted Aeromedical Service Delivery



# Our Bases

## Broken Hill

With a rich history dating back to 1936, Broken Hill is our oldest Base. From here we operate many primary health clinics where patients from surrounding remote and outback communities can access vital healthcare services including general practice, mental health, alcohol and drug counselling, chronic disease management programs, a respiratory clinic for COVID-19 testing, oral healthcare and women's, children's and family health services.

The Clive Bishop Medical Centre also operates from our Broken Hill Base delivering a range of additional non-emergency health services, as well as immunisation, wound care and skin checks.

Broken Hill Base operates a 24/7 emergency evacuation service capable of dispatching a medical team to an incident by air within 60 minutes of receiving a call. To support this service, it has a dedicated engineering maintenance facility and team of licensed aircraft maintenance engineers who carry out scheduled heavy maintenance across our fleet of Beechcraft King Air aircraft.

## Dubbo

Dubbo Base provides services and clinics that meet the healthcare needs of the remote, rural and regional communities of the central and far west of NSW. Services delivered from Dubbo include general practice, women's, child's and family healthcare, drug and alcohol counselling services, and specialist clinics with medical consultants including ear, nose and throat specialists, dermatologists and eye specialists. We also run an oral health program (known as The Outback Oral Health and Treatment - TOOTH - program) from here. Our dedicated team of dentists travel to remote communities including Collarenebri, Bourke, Lightning Ridge and Goodooga to deliver this vital service.

A 24/7 aeromedical emergency retrieval service operates from Dubbo Base with aeromedical flight crew teams conducting emergency patient transfers and inter-hospital transfers on behalf of the NSW Ambulance Service as the tasking authority.

In addition, a Non-Emergency Patient Transfer (NEPT) service is co-ordinated through our Operations Centre, located at Dubbo Base, on behalf of HealthShare as the tasking authority. This service provides greater access to specialist care not available in regional areas by providing people with the ability to travel quickly and comfortably to various metropolitan hospitals located in Sydney.

In December 2020, the Operations Centre moved to a 24/7 service.

## Mascot

In Mascot, a team of Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) pilots, engineers and support staff deliver 24/7 aviation support to NSW Air Ambulance through the provision of five dedicated Beechcraft King Air aircraft. Medical staff from NSW Air Ambulance are responsible for attending to medical emergencies and inter-hospital patient transfers using our aircraft.

## Bankstown

From this Base, our pilots and aircraft support the work of the Rural Area Health Service (RAHS). Clinicians from the RAHS travel on our aircraft to remote communities including Bourke and Brewarrina to deliver GP clinics and other primary healthcare services.

In May 2021, we provided an additional aircraft and aeromedical crew at Bankstown Airport, on weekdays, to support Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPT) and Neonatal Emergency Transfer Services on behalf of HealthShare and NSW Health.

# Other sites

## Launceston

We have a team of dedicated pilots and engineers delivering 24/7 aviation support services on behalf of Ambulance Tasmania from RFDS Tasmania's Launceston Base facility. Ambulance Tasmania medical crews are responsible for attending to all medical emergency retrievals and inter hospital patient transfers.

## Essendon

A Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) team of pilots and engineers provide aviation support services to Royal Flying Doctor Service Victorian Section from Essendon Base. This includes the provision of non-emergency inter-hospital and neonatal patient transport services.

# Dubbo Base turns 20

This year, the Flying Doctor celebrated two decades of Base operations in Dubbo.

The milestone was marked at a special gathering held on the 24th February 2021. The event was attended by Member for the State seat of Dubbo, the Hon. Dugald Saunders and former Dubbo Mayor, Ben Shields as well as Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) Board members, Base staff, past patients and local community groups and businesses.

Royal Flying Doctor (South Eastern Section) CEO Greg Sam said it was an important opportunity to celebrate the significant contribution the Base had made to communities in the region since opening its doors more than 20 years ago.

***“I am proud to reflect on over two decades of health services delivered to our communities such as inter-hospital patient transfers, emergency retrievals, blood storage and dental services,”*** Mr Sam said.

Dubbo Base was initially established in 1999 following a passionate campaign from the Dubbo Support Group and the Rotary Club of Dubbo South seeking to bring the Flying Doctor ***“mantle of safety”*** to the region.

Since then, the Base has grown in many ways including with the addition of an Aeromedical Terminal and hanger in 2001. This was developed by Dubbo Regional Council and Dubbo City Regional Airport to provide an all-weather shelter for patients and aircraft.

In 2019, as part of a larger redevelopment of Dubbo Base, a new state-of-the-art Royal Flying Doctor Service Visitor Experience was opened. The experience shares the inspirational history of the Flying Doctor through a series of hands-on and interactive exhibits.

Along with the Visitor Experience came a brand-new flight training simulator and a medical and health training area featuring high tech simulation equipment. These facilities, the first of their kind in the Flying Doctor’s 93-year history, provide the training pilots and clinicians need to remain at the cutting edge of aviation and health care.

The flight training simulator was made possible through a gift in a Will from one of our generous supporters, and the medical and training area was funded through a significant donation from a longstanding and committed donor.

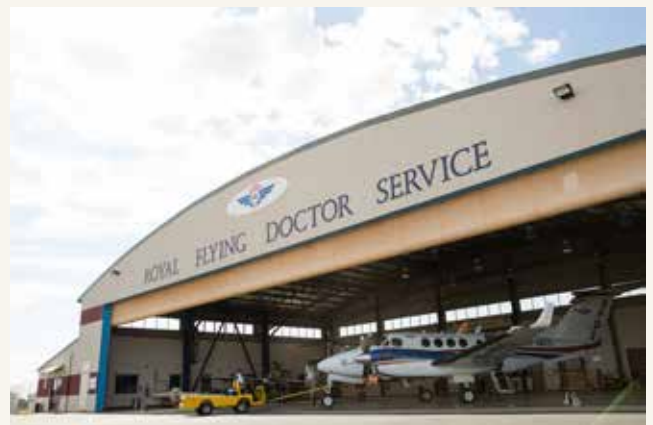


Our Board President Alexander Scamps, former Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council Ben Shields, our CEO Greg Sam and Dubbo Regional Councillor Greg Mohr.

With more than 20 years of service under her belt, Karen Barlow is one of the longest-serving members of the Dubbo Base team. Karen says things have come a long way since she started, one of just three flight nurses with a single aircraft between them.

***“Today the Dubbo Base employs over 100 people, we have 13 flight nurses, 22 doctors, 18 pilots, three dentists and other operations, administrative and tourism staff,”*** Ms Barlow says.

Here’s to the next 20 years of delivering on the healthcare needs of those living in north west New South Wales.



# How we help: **Emergency retrieval and patient transfer**

**9** Evacuations on average per month

**8,463** Inter-hospital patient transfers

For more than 90 years, the Flying Doctor has been the lifeline to high-quality medical care for people living in the outback facing a medical emergency. Our Retrieval Team is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These highly trained critical care doctors and flight nurses respond to emergency callouts across the network, travelling in fully-equipped critical care aircraft to treat critically ill and injured patients who would otherwise have limited or no access to medical care. While new safety protocols and procedures introduced because of the COVID-19 pandemic have changed the way we operate emergency retrievals, the demand for this critical care service from those living, travelling and working in remote and rural locations is no less diminished.

Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) also operates a Non-Emergency Patient Transport service to support patients in the outback who have non-life-threatening conditions, but limited access to medical services. This service operates seven days a week from 6am to 10pm for people living in Western and Southern NSW. Using two of our aircraft based at Dubbo and Bankstown Airports and nine vehicles based at locations across the network, we move patients between hospitals, clinics and their homes under the care of a Flight or Registered Nurse. We also carry out neonatal emergency transfers of newborn babies in life-threatening situations.

## Snapshot of the Year

- We continued to work in the challenging COVID-19 environment, adhering to the new policies and procedures that were developed and introduced at the start of the pandemic. This has meant all our flight crews have been required to treat many emergency retrievals as a COVID-positive case, following strict safety protocols before, during and after incidents.
- We have expanded our nursing team to include Registered Nurses who support our critical care Flight Nurses by delivering services using our ground vehicles. This has come about following increased demand for our Non-Emergency Patient Transport service.
- We are preparing to receive our first Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) emergency retrieval ambulance at Broken Hill Base. Supported by the Rinehart Medical Foundation, the ambulance arrived in Sydney in late May and is currently being fitted out as

a fully-equipped retrieval ambulance. Having access to this ambulance will enable our Retrieval Team to respond directly to time-critical emergencies when other resources are limited or already out on a job. It will mean that we can transport our staff to the incident or retrieve people who are injured or ill. Having our own emergency retrieval ambulance will also allow our medical teams to respond to some incidents more quickly than travelling by air to the emergency.

- Our Operations Centre at the Dubbo Base moved to a 24-hour service in December 2020. Among its many functions, the Centre is responsible for managing our after-hours doctor on-call service, non-emergency patient transfers and neonatal emergency transfers, as well as aircraft tracking and assignment. As part of the upgrade, we now employ a second on-call doctor who is available during daytime hours to respond to emergency calls via the Medical Assistance Line from remote hospitals or people in remote locations. We have also established a new system whereby if neither of our Broken Hill emergency doctors is available, calls are diverted to our Dubbo team.
- In February 2021, our Retrieval Team were put to the test when a crew was called to assist those on the ground responding to a fire at the historic Tibooburra Two Storey Hotel where several people were injured and badly burnt. At the scene of the incident, our crew, working alongside the local emergency response teams, quickly realised the multi-patient emergency would require additional help – and extra critical care equipment. In a remote location with limited staff, this met the criteria for a disaster response with local resource stretched to the limit. An off-duty Doctor and Flight Nurse based in Dubbo volunteered to join the crew. After assessing the patients and providing medical care and pain relief, one team flew two burns patients to Adelaide. A firefighter with shrapnel injuries was airlifted to Broken Hill by the crew responding from Dubbo before being transferred to Adelaide. Two other patients were treated at the scene by our medical crew and cleared to go home. After this major incident our Mental Health team was deployed to help with the post incident management in Tibooburra as a part of a comprehensive response.

# How we help:

## Primary Healthcare

As we continue to meet the healthcare needs of the people living and working in the communities we serve, growing the health services we deliver has become a key focus area. We work to provide the best care as quickly as possible to people where they need it, and throughout life.

Some of the vital services we provide include remote clinics, women's, children's and family health services, 24-hour telehealth support, five-day-week telehealth GP services and health information and education in remote communities. We also have a specialist Breast Care nurse, generously funded by the McGrath Foundation and provide medical chests with emergency pharmaceuticals and medical supplies in remote locations across our network.

The doctors, nurses, dentists, health practitioners, Aboriginal health workers, mental health workers and specialist clinicians who make up our Primary Healthcare team play a vital role in improving the health outcomes of children and adults in rural and remote communities. Without our primary health clinics, telehealth services, mobile dental services and mental health, alcohol and other drugs services, people living in remote communities would have limited or no access to the high-quality health services available to people in metropolitan areas.

We are committed to ensuring the communities we serve have access to the healthcare services and supports they need to live healthy and happy lives.

### Snapshot of the Year

- We have moved ahead strongly with our health services plan and are now operating under a Health Services Model with dedicated managers across our key streams: Primary Health, Dental, Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Clive Bishop Medical Centre, Emergency and Retrieval and Governance, Partnerships and Engagement. We have appointed two Health Service Managers, one in Dubbo and one in Broken Hill. This patient-centred approach aligns with our strategy to deliver health services and medical care based on what our patients need in the communities where they need them.
- We have expanded the services we provide around communities such as Grawin and Lightning Ridge to now also offer primary health nursing and a General Practitioner who visits the area two days a fortnight. We have been delivering Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs and Dental Care services in these locations for several years.
- We introduced a Mobile Primary Health Service, where nurses travel out by vehicle to communities such as Grawin, Enngonia, Pooncarie, Hungerford and many more to deliver comprehensive health assessments, prior to doctors visiting. These nurse-led clinics are part of our strategy to address the high rate of chronic disease and poorer health outcomes among those living and working in the outback. Our community engagement team has found that many people living in rural and remote areas have never had a comprehensive health assessment and may be living with chronic diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular heart disease. To deliver this service, we employed additional nurses who specialise in comprehensive assessments and chronic disease. This service has been made possible thanks to the generosity of our donors. See page 37 to read a case study on this new service.
- We have been working with the University Departments of Rural Health and Far West Local Health District to develop a Rural Generalist GP pathway that meets the needs of the health workforce in rural and remote areas.
- After a delay due to COVID-19 border restrictions, we opened a new permanently staffed primary health clinic in Innamincka, generously funded by a longstanding donor.
- Our Primary Healthcare teams played a huge role in our Service's response to the COVID-19 outbreak. We opened a respiratory clinic in Broken Hill and delivered COVID testing across the network, working closely with the Local Health Districts and other providers. We employed new staff to assist with delivering these services. In 2021, we have been working with Local Health Districts to support the vaccination rollout phase.
- The Clive Bishop Medical Centre has continued to grow in patient numbers, with up to 1,500 people accessing the centre in some months. Part of this increase has come from a growing acceptance of telehealth as an efficient, convenient and effective way for patients to see their doctor and stay on top of their health around their busy lives. COVID-19 crisis funding has helped us to fast-track our digital health plan and implement telehealth equipment far sooner than we had anticipated was possible.
- We supported several medical and health students, including dental and pharmacy trainees, to broaden their experience and skills by working with our teams in rural and remote communities.

# Respiratory Clinic keeps community safe



Kristy James became our first Infection Control Nurse at the start of the pandemic.



In early 2020, at the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Flying Doctor stepped up to deliver a GP-led Respiratory Testing Clinic for people living in and around Broken Hill. It played a critical role in the Government's strategy to prevent the spread of the disease in the region.

Kristy James, who became our inaugural Infection Control Nurse at the outset of the pandemic, says the clinic met an urgent community need.

***"People were presenting to our GP clinics with respiratory symptoms and we needed to stop that from happening to prevent the potential spread of the virus. [With the respiratory clinic], we were able to assess, treat and test patients, and give them information and advice about isolating.***

***"We were also able to stop people with complex respiratory conditions from presenting at hospitals at a major stage of disease."***

Located at Broken Hill Base in a separate building away from our retrieval operations, the clinic is staffed by a doctor or nurse practitioner and a nurse.

As well as COVID-19 testing, the clinic has provided support to people living with other respiratory illnesses throughout the pandemic. The model of care has also been rolled out to remote COVID-19 hotspots on a fly-in-fly-out basis.

While patient numbers have stabilised since an initial peak of more than 200 per week, Kristy says border closures and vaccinations have kept clinic staff busy.

***"Broken Hill is seen as a border town and we did a lot of testing so people could travel across the border for medical appointments in Adelaide and so kids could get back to school.***

***"Our vaccination program is also in full swing now and will continue to ramp up with Pfizer vaccines over coming months."***

While responding to the COVID-19 situation in Broken Hill has come with its fair share of challenges, Kristy says it has also provided valuable learning opportunities for the Flying Doctor as an organisation.

***"When we had positive cases identified here in Broken Hill, we had to change our way of working really quickly. We had to put systems in place to make sure the community could book appointments online. We also needed systems in place to collect and deliver highly contagious specimens.***

***"We've learned a lot about infection control, and I don't think we'll ever go back from having things like an isolation room and Personal Protective Equipment."***

While the Respiratory Clinic remains ready to respond to any future COVID-19 outbreaks, Kristy believes it has an important role to play in a post-pandemic world.

***"Too often, people with respiratory symptoms wait till things get really bad before they seek help. Too many end up in hospital, which is understandable because it's a very scary thing when you can't breathe.***

***"There is a lot of data suggesting if we can respond to respiratory issues in a preventative health setting like our clinic, we can prevent hospitalisations, and that's a good thing for the whole health system."***



# How we help:

## Dental care

Our team delivers vital dental and oral health programs from our Dubbo and Broken Hill bases as well as remote clinics made possible by our specialist dental van. Without the Flying Doctor, many of the communities we serve would not have local access to dental care.

**722** clinics conducted

**44** locations

**4,713** dental patient visits

### Snapshot of the year

- This year we moved to a fly-in-fly-out model for employing dentists to deliver programs and services across the rural and remote communities we serve. This has proven to be very successful, with dentists from Sydney and Adelaide able to apply the skills they have developed from working in a broad range of settings in outback communities. Our dental assistants and patients are benefiting from the increased knowledge and experience this model allows.
- Now fully operational, our Louth, Tilpa and Innamincka clinics are creating great improvements to the delivery of dental services from both a patient and clinician perspective.
- Our mentoring program for students from the University of Sydney resumed this year at Broken Hill. To date, we have mentored 16 students, who will each complete two more rotations before the end of 2021. The students have enjoyed the experience and are very appreciative of the opportunity to treat real patients – unlike last year, when they could only work on ‘dummies’. Their skills have improved greatly under this program.
- In addition to our Broken Hill based mentoring program, we provided one day a week of tutoring to eight final year dental students from Charles Sturt University. These students remain with us throughout the year and travel to outlying communities when there are seats available on our planes.
- We took on a new Indigenous Dental Assistant this year. After completing her Higher School Certificate in Mildura, Bethany Hudson has returned to Bourke and will begin her Dental Assistant Traineeship in July 2021.
- To protect the health and wellbeing of aged care residents during the COVID-19 pandemic, we put our Aged Care and Toothbrushing programs on hold for much of the past year. We have since revisited these facilities and given patients with dentures cleaning devices that were donated to us before the pandemic.
- While infection control and prevention have always been the highest of priorities for our team, we increased our vigilance in this area over the last 12 months in response to COVID-19. The wearing of gowns, shields and masks has now become second nature for our dentists. We thank patients for their understanding, which has enabled us to maintain our services with only minimal interruptions.
- This year, we once again benefitted from the generous assistance of David and Jenny Hancock, who donated their time and expertise over four two-week stints, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. Mohit Tolani, also kindly provided dental services on a volunteer basis for a week at a time when his work and family commitments allowed. We warmly thank David, Jenny and Mohit for their contribution.



# How we help:

## Community engagement

Understanding the complex and changing health needs of the communities we serve is critical to providing the right support and care – today and into the future.

To deliver the best health outcomes for people living in rural and remote areas, we work collaboratively with a broad range of stakeholders. Our motto is 'consumers are our partners'. We meet regularly and learn from patients at clinics and facilities, people in their homes and communities, Aboriginal land councils, local businesses as well as government agencies.

The feedback we receive through these conversations helps us better understand how our services are performing in terms of accessibility and suitability, and what can be done to improve them. Engaging with communities also helps us identify gaps in service delivery and develop better services and programs for the future.

### Snapshot of the year

- Our Community Engagement team spent three days in the North West Corridor scoping out potential sites for new clinics in the region. While there, the team received valuable feedback from communities on issues related to mobile services, clinics, pharmaceutical prescriptions and online patient enrolment. They also assessed what equipment and resources would need to be sourced from outside the area.
- Thanks to funding from a private foundation, we have employed a Senior Aboriginal Community Engagement Worker who is collaborating with local partners to support Aboriginal communities across the network.
- A special event was held to coincide with the opening of our Innamincka Clinic this year. Community members from surrounding properties and local National Parks and Flying Doctor staff members were joined at the event by Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) General Manager, Jenny Beach and our major donor who made the clinic possible. After a beautiful Welcome to Country and inspiring speeches, attendees enjoyed a delicious sit-down lunch provided by the Innamincka Hotel.
- The White Cliffs health service received a visit from NSW Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, in a morning tea organised by the Community Engagement team. Also attended by key members of the Local Health Council, the morning tea followed an official greeting and a tour of the facility. In June Her Excellency and Mr Wilson also visited the Louth Clinic where they were greeted by the Clinic Coordinator and local community leaders. The new Mobile Primary Health vehicle and comprehensive Nurse led Clinics were the focus for this visit.
- In 2020/21, a Network Communications Plan (NCP) was developed to create a more coordinated approach to key messaging and stakeholder engagement across our Sydney, Dubbo and Broken Hill teams. The NCP forms part of our broader 2019-2022 Community and Consumer Engagement Plan, which will enable the service to communicate more clearly and efficiently with stakeholders, both proactively and reactively.
- This year we developed electronic consumer surveys linked to each of our health programs. The new platform allows patients and clients to provide feedback simply and quickly through surveys on a website linked to a QR code. The information gathered through these surveys will provide valuable data, assist managers with reporting and allow further improvements to our programs in the future.
- In 2020/21 we initiated a monthly Clinic Coordinators forum. The forum is designed to address questions and concerns from our bush clinics and educate volunteers on significant health issues. Guest presenters from the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) attend the forums to speak on important topics such as the COVID-19 vaccination rollout, the flu vaccination and infection control. The forums also provide Coordinators with an opportunity to learn from each other.
- A Volunteer Framework and communications plan were developed this year and endorsed by the Executive Team.



# How we help: Mental Health services and Alcohol and Other Drugs programs

The Royal Flying Doctors Service (South Eastern Section) provides vital mental health support to those facing the challenges that come with life in remote and rural communities.

**2,761**  
face-to-face consultations

**3,732**  
telehealth sessions

**1,616**  
clinics

**34**  
Service/clinic locations

Our Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs (AoD) services and programs are as unique and diverse as the communities we work in. Our team of nurses, social workers, Aboriginal clinical support workers, community engagement workers, play therapists and mental health peer support workers deliver programs and services from 34 locations across the network.

These services and programs include everything from fly-in-fly-out clinics in remote communities to face-to-face counselling, phone-based consultations as well as school and community-based events and workshops.





## Snapshot of the year

- Despite the challenges of COVID, our Wellbeing Place in Broken Hill saw continued growth this year and has quickly become a much-loved community hub. It now offers a wide range of arts and wellbeing activities including yoga, meditation, ukulele classes and art workshops run in partnership with Broken Hill Art Exchange. There is also a resource library of self-help and other books on the premises. The increase in visitors is building a sense of community and leading to increased uptake of clinical mental health as well as AoD counselling. The success of the initiative has led to the establishment of new Wellbeing Places in Dubbo and Lightning Ridge.
- Now in its second year, our Guiding Rural Outback Wellbeing (GROW) program has proved a great success and we continue to roll it out across the network. The program encourages young people to live healthy lives by learning about growing and producing food. Most of our programs operate out of schools.  
From next year, a generous donation will allow us to employ a dedicated GROW staff member and establish the program in four new locations. In 2020/21, students, staff and community were also provided with Aquaponics Professional Development training. Fish were then delivered in April 2021, allowing students to grow vegetables and plants in their aquaponics systems. Our team engages with communities through the GROW program and offers Mental Health and AoD counselling to those who need it. We also offer early intervention and promotion of healthier living choices programs to young people.  
Another key component of GROW is the Save-A-Mate program, which is delivered in partnership with Red Cross. This program delivers AoD based first aid interventions for young people. This year, Flying Doctor staff were trained to be Save-A-Mate facilitators.
- Our We've Got Your Back program continued to grow this year, with seven new Champions joining our team. These Champions, who each have personal experience of dealing with mental health challenges, will provide peer support to those in their communities who are struggling. One of our existing Champions is now looking to become a fully qualified Peer Mental Health Worker and join the Mental Health team permanently.  
In addition to growing our team of Champions, we held several events in communities across the network, which gave people the opportunity to come together and talk about mental health issues. We also did a fly-around and trained 39 people across the Far West to become accidental counsellors.
- In 2020/21 we rolled out the Rural Connect program. Delivered in partnership with Contact Inc, this program provides much-needed support to children and families who are isolated. The project is currently focused on families, primarily in the communities of Wanaaring, Louth and Tilpa. As a result of this work, we held an activity day in each of the three communities to bring families together for some much-needed social interaction, and to provide pathways into clinical mental health and AoD counselling for those who needed it. A local midwifery student joined the team through a scholarship to assist with the running of the program and supporting families on the ground locally.
- Our Play Therapy program continued to grow this year, with the addition of a second child & family focused role and school input. Based in Broken Hill, the team delivers an outreach program to children and families across the network.
- This year our team reached out to Alison House Boarding School and offered to provide early detection mental health support to young people from remote townships who are studying at the school. This initiative improves the capacity of young people to cope with life as a teenager, away from home and family.
- Working in partnership with Broken Hill PCYC, at-risk children now come to the Wellbeing Place each Wednesday to study topics like Mindfulness as part of their Fit-for-Life program. This initiative often takes place in our shed workshop to increase the engagement with the young people involved.
- This year, Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) AoD clinicians were trained in the provision of naloxone to clients who are at risk of opioid overdose as part of an NSW Health pilot program. This program allows our practitioners to deliver life-saving medications that can reverse opiate overdoses to people living in rural and remote communities. Our AoD staff also established a family support group for people living with addiction.
- Our Workshop program in Broken Hill remained popular this year. Run every Friday, the program allows people to come to the fully equipped Workshop, learn new skills and fix things of their choice. It also gives them the chance to talk to a trained counsellor and access any additional mental health support they need.

## A Champion for Mental Health

Jane Martin understands as well as anyone how tough life on the land can be. She experienced her fair share of ups and downs over the decade and half she and her husband managed remote properties, as she explains.

*"We lived through two droughts, so we know what people out there go through. It's a real struggle on a number of fronts. You have all these tough day-to-day business decisions, like deciding how you're going to feed your livestock, or whether you should sell them. Then you have to contend with terrible dust storms, and always have concern for your family and friends, and how each of them is dealing with things. It can be overwhelming."*

Jane says life on the land can take a particularly heavy toll on women.

*"Some of us struggle a lot. The isolation and unique things that come with it, like having to send our kids to boarding school, are especially difficult. I struggled with that myself because, as a mum, I felt like I had no sense of purpose when the kids went to town to board. I ended up seeing someone from the Flying Doctor Mental Health team in Broken Hill to help me through that."*

When Jane was invited to join the We've Got Your Back Mental Health Peer Support program, she jumped at the opportunity to give something back to her community.

*"I felt honoured to be asked. I've always felt I'm a good listener and would naturally check in with neighbours and people in the community to see how they're going."*

After completing the mandatory training, Jane became a We've Got Your Back (WGYB) Champion – someone people in her community can reach out to when they feel like they need to talk. Whether it is over the phone or in person, a WGYB Champion aims to be an empathetic and active listener who their peers feel comfortable talking to.

*"It is important people know they can us call for any reason. I find many people don't have family support, or their close family and friends don't live on the land, so although they care, often they struggle to understand the unique challenges we face,"* Jane explains.

*"Sometimes a chat, or a few catch ups can make all the difference. It may just be a tough patch and they need an understanding ear. Or if needed, we discuss formal services and I can help make an appointment with a GP or counsellor. I've also helped people connect with Centrelink and the Rural Financial Counsellor. We're there to support people to figure out their next step."*

Since coming on board as a Champion, Jane's role in the Flying Doctor's Mental Health team has continued to grow. She now works a few days a week based out of our Wellbeing Place in Broken Hill and is also enrolled to start her Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work in August 2021.

Jane says she hopes her involvement with We've Got Your Back and our other Mental Health programs will continue to grow in the years ahead.

*"The program is so valuable for people living on the land. I'm grateful for the people I've met through my Champion role and for the trust they have placed in me. It's lovely to check back in with them and see they've overcome the challenges that had caused them distress. It's very rewarding. It's moments like that you know we're making a difference."*



# How we work: Fleet and equipment

The Flying Doctor's waiting room is immense, spanning rural and remote regions. Delivering vital health services across our network safely and efficiently depends on a large fleet of aircraft and road vehicles.

Our highly trained frontline team of engineers, aviation experts, operations staff, safety and training professionals and aircraft and ground crew work hard to ensure our fleet is properly equipped, thoroughly maintained and performing at its best at all times. Their efforts allow our doctors, nurses, dental team and other health professionals to provide help, whenever and wherever it is needed.



**5,368,336**  
Kilometres flown



**21**  
Aircraft



**10**  
Road Vehicles



**3**  
Primary Health Vehicles



**1**  
Dental Van

## Snapshot of the year

- The downturn in commercial aviation during the COVID-19 pandemic presented us with an opportunity to grow our aviation workforce. Six new pilots joined our team in the last financial year and are now helping us deliver vital health services across the network.
- We continued to expand our Flight Data Analysis Program. With three aircraft already upgraded to new Avionics standards, additional aircraft will be upgraded later in 2021. That means we will soon have the capacity to monitor our entire fleet.
- This year we opted to extend our trial of five-blade composite propellers to include a second company, Raisbeck/Hartzell. We are currently midway through a trial which includes audiometric testing to measure and compare cabin noise and its impact on patient and staff safety and comfort.
- Broken Hill Base will soon have its own Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) emergency retrieval ambulance. Arrival of the ambulance has been delayed due to the pandemic, but we expect the customised vehicle to be operational in the first half of 2021/22. Supported by the Rinehart Medical Foundation, the ambulance arrived in Sydney in late May and is currently being fitted out. The new ambulance will enable our Retrieval Team to respond to time-critical emergencies when other resources are limited or already out on a job. We will be able to transport our staff to the incident or retrieve people who are injured or ill. It will also mean our medical teams can respond to some incidents more quickly using the ambulance rather than travelling by air.



# How we work:

## Facilities and upgrades

We are committed to ensuring people living in the rural and remote communities we serve have access to the best possible medical equipment and health facilities we can deliver.

Giving our communities the resources and facilities they need is critical to our success. We regularly invest in new facilities and equipment and make ongoing improvements to our existing infrastructure and bases.

After completing some significant projects in recent years, including the major redevelopment of the Dubbo Base and state-of-the-art Visitor Centre, we have taken a step back from large projects this financial year to focus on planning for the future.



### Snapshot of the year

- The new purpose-built primary health clinic in Innamincka, became operational and was opened by our donor in March. Construction of the building was completed in the previous financial year, but COVID-19 border restrictions led to a delay in opening the clinic and commencing services.
- We opened two more Wellbeing Places in Dubbo and Lightning Ridge. These have been developed in the same flavour as the Broken Hill Wellbeing Place, and are warm, welcoming spaces, designed as a fitting location for the Mental Health team to engage in their work.
- We are delighted with our new office in Sydney where we have brought together our corporate teams and Sydney-based aviation staff for the first time. While it took some months for all staff to transition into the new premises, due to COVID-19 restrictions, we quickly noticed improved collaboration between teams and other positive benefits. We are particularly pleased with the design, layout and interior of the space, which is influenced by the outback.
- Planning has continued on a major project to upgrade the Clive Bishop Medical Centre at the Broken Hill Base. This will provide additional space for consulting, and an improved workflow. This initial project is the first stage of a plan to grow our Primary Care offering so we can truly care for our people in a patient centred approach.
- We have committed to operating aeromedical services originating from Bankstown Airport as a base for operations to supplement service demand across the network, specifically in Non-Emergency Patient Transport and Newborn and Paediatric Emergency Transport Services. With promising early results, it is envisaged the service will further build on existing capability.



# Our Operations Centre goes 24/7



In December 2020, the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section's) Dubbo-based Operations Centre transitioned to a round-the clock model. It now provides critical operational and communications support to a range of programs and services across our network – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



The Operations Centre came into existence when the Flying Doctor was awarded the Non-Emergency Patient Transport contract with HealthShare NSW. Its primary function was to coordinate the transfer of non-emergency patients who live in remote areas to, from and between hospitals and other medical facilities. But as Team Leader Margaret Moon explains, the Centre's role has evolved with the shift to 24/7 operations.

***"We've now become a central hub for communications and logistics across the network."***

***"We're providing support to a wide range of programs and services and arranging transfers for a broader range of patients."***

***"We arrange transport for patients ranging from neo-natal patients, people requiring specialist care unavailable where they live and for those in palliative situations, so they can be closer to their homes for end-of-life care."***

While coordinating transport for patients remains the Centre's core business, the team has taken on a range of other responsibilities and functionalities. This includes coordinating transport and logistical support for many of our remote clinics providing services including women's health, dental care, optometry, physiotherapy and mental health services.

***"By allowing those clinics to happen, we are helping to provide services to those rural communities that they wouldn't otherwise have,"*** Margaret says.

Another function of the Operations Centre is to assist our Broken Hill Base to close the gap and manage a 24-hour on-call doctor's line. Margaret says it is providing a vital service to remote communities.

***"The feedback from both the doctors and patients has been really good. The service really helps smaller hospitals in places like Wilcannia, and communities like White Cliffs where there isn't a permanent doctor on-site."***

Margaret says the Centre has quickly become critical to meeting the health needs of people in rural and remote areas.

***"A lot of the patients we arrange transport for are not able to get the care they need in the smaller communities. The only way they can get to where they need to go, quickly and efficiently is to fly. Without our service, many people wouldn't be able to do that."***

***"Families just want their loved ones to get the best care. We take away their concerns and help make that happen."***

# How we work:

## Clinical quality and safety

We have continued our focus on clinical risk, quality and safety to ensure we can meet the health needs of the communities we serve while maintaining a high standard of service delivery. Providing ongoing learning and education is also an important way we maintain a high level of quality in our services.

Like many organisations across the world, responding to COVID-19 presented opportunities to review our health policies and procedures, as well as develop new solutions and ways of meeting the needs of our patients. Many of the new measures we introduced in the previous year to protect patients and staff have now become common practice. We recognise that as Australia's management of COVID-19 unfolds, the way we deliver services will also evolve.

### Snapshot of the year

- This year, we reviewed and updated our Medical Legal Framework to meet best practice.
- We successfully completed accreditation against both the ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems and Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL) benchmarks.
- Our medical and health care teams have been involved in literature reviews and clinical education training opportunities to grow their skills in this area.

# How we work: Organisational risk and assurance

Our Risk and Assurance team supports the organisation to deliver quality services from safe and compliant workplaces. The team is responsible for activities such as audit programs, investigations and risk management activities.

### Snapshot of the year

- Across the whole organisation, we maintained our certification against the ISO 9001: 2015 Quality Management Systems. TQCSI-Yaran, an Indigenous ISO management systems auditing and certification organisation, conducted the surveillance audit in December and provided positive feedback on how we are meeting quality and safety standards.
- In the area of Work Health Safety, we are working towards meeting requirements set out in the international standard, ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management. We aim to provide all Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) staff with clear and concise policies, procedures, and systems to not only ensure their safety, and the safety of those around them, but to also allow for more efficient business practices.
- With more services and clinics being rolled out, we are adjusting our work, health and safety awareness to ensure the safety and wellbeing of not only our staff, but also the people in the communities where we provide services.
- A large amount of work went into transitioning the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) to new CASA standards around Flight Operations, Engineering and Aircraft Maintenance, Airworthiness and Pilot Fatigue. Complying with these new standards will bring the Flying Doctor in line with commercial airlines and expand the activities allowed under our Air Operator Certificate. This will open significant new work opportunities in the future. This process is expected to be completed by December 2021.

# How we work: Aviation safety

We take ensuring the safety of our patients and staff very seriously. Maintenance and upkeep of our aircraft, vehicles and equipment rests with our flight operations and engineering teams located at our bases.

All our on-board equipment – from medical devices through to the aircraft – is put through thorough checks prior to each flight and routine maintenance is conducted every 200 hours of flying.

From a staff perspective, we support our flight and medical crews to develop their skills to respond to emergencies calmly and efficiently to ensure the safety of patients and others involved in emergencies or patient transfers. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 implications, the annual emergency exercise at Dubbo Airport, involving our team as well as other emergency services organisations, did not run this year. We look forward to participating when the next exercise can go ahead.

## Snapshot of the year

- We continued our project to upgrade remote airstrips located across the network. Over the duration of the project, we will have completed 61 airstrip and lighting surveys, and provided 37 sets of emergency flares for night operations. Additionally, Area Navigation (RNAV) procedures were installed and activated in three locations. We are grateful to our donors and the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications for providing funding to ensure this vital safety project could go ahead. We rely on airstrips on private properties to be able to land in remote locations where we may be responding to a medical emergency or conducting a clinic.
- As part of our work on remote airstrips, we have consistently provided guidance to airstrip owners about the importance of having access to accurate information and how vital it is our pilots are aware of the conditions of the airstrip they are intending to land on. Additional information has been provided to highlight that many factors including the length and weather conditions can impact whether the aircraft and aeromedical crew are safe to land.

# How we work: Aviation training

Our Aviation crews participate in regular training and upskilling to ensure the organisation meets all regulatory requirements, and the highest standards in safety are maintained.

Skills refreshers are provided for all team members and our pilots take part in a bespoke and contemporary flight simulation training program. Snap lockdowns and border restrictions made flight operations pilot training and testing very challenging, particularly pilot training and proficiency checking which, prior to the pandemic, took place in Maroochydore in Queensland.

## Snapshot of the year

- With COVID-19 border closures preventing pilots from travelling to Maroochydore for flight training and proficiency checks, our Aviation Training and Flight Operations teams worked with CASA to gain interim approval to use our Dubbo Flight Training Device. This resulted in the development of a thorough Safety and Risk Management Plan (SRMP) to allow the Dubbo Flight Training Device to be used for pilot proficiency checks. The SRMP was in place from mid 2020 until March 2021 to ensure we could continue to meet regulatory compliance requirements, despite the travel restrictions.
- New visual models of remote airfields in Packsaddle, Wiawera and Wilcannia were added to the Dubbo Flight Training Device airfield database, allowing our pilots to train using accurate simulated visualisation of airfields they are likely to have to fly into. These additions were made possible thanks to assistance from Flight Operations and funding for the remote airfields upgrade program. These new airfield models are a first for any Australian flight simulator. They significantly add to the quality and validity of the training we provide Flying Doctor pilots.

# Our People

Our talented, highly skilled and dedicated workforce is our most important resource. They are what makes it possible for the Flying Doctor to deliver vital healthcare services to the remote communities we serve.

Empowering our employees to do their best work starts with supporting their physical and emotional health and wellbeing. That is why creating and nurturing a workplace culture where people feel safe and valued is our highest priority. We are also committed to providing our people with the training, support and development opportunities they need to grow and fulfil their personal and career goals within the business.

## Snapshot of the year

- We are proud to report that as an organisation, there was limited impact to the working conditions of our employees, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. We were able to scale up and scale down our services in response to the needs of the communities and stakeholders we serve, and redeploy and refocus resources so that employees were not impacted significantly in terms of their working hours. While most of our teams have returned to our bases and offices, we took the opportunity to review our flexible working policies to reflect the changing needs of our workforce.
- We continue to invest in the training and development of our people. This year our Leader's Lunch and Learn program continued, covering a range of topics that aim to build capability in essential skills.
- With continued attention on the shift from a traditional base structure to greater focus on providing Health Services, we implemented a restructure of the Health Service at our Broken Hill and Dubbo bases to better support the increasingly complex healthcare landscape in which the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) operates. The key to this model is providing the best healthcare as quickly as possible wherever it is needed, both when illness or injury happen, and for people who need to manage their health and wellness throughout life.
- Despite the well published challenge of attracting and retaining medical talent in our rural and remote locations, during the year we were able to source and attract new recruits from both local and international markets. COVID-19 slowed down our ability to relocate those travelling from other countries, however these resourcing challenges had minimal impact on our ability to deliver services to our communities.
- We consolidated all our Sydney-based workforce into one purpose-built premise. The aim was to drive collaboration between teams, as well as provide a modern office environment that directly correlates with the outback through the design of the workplace.
- With COVID-19 restrictions limiting face-to-face activities, our onboarding program for new employees was re-designed as an engaging online experience.
- With the goal to provide market competitive terms and conditions of employment, we successfully negotiated and ratified several new Enterprise Bargaining Agreements, working closely with the Fair Work Commission.
- To support our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion, three key areas of priority were identified: cultural awareness and safety, disability, and mental health and wellness.
- To support the ongoing development of operations within the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section), significant work has been carried out in automating foundation operating processes. During the year, this included the implementation of recruitment software to provide greater visibility on the overall recruitment process, improve the candidate experience, save time and improve reporting.

## Dr Mary Beth Macisaac, Senior Medical Officer

It was the Flying Doctor's wonderful reputation that attracted Dr Mary Beth Macisaac to make the big move from Sydney to Broken Hill.

*"I've been working in General Practice in suburban Sydney since I moved to Australia in 2010. I'm really passionate about providing high-quality General Practice (GP) and with the Royal Flying Doctor Service moving into primary care, I thought Broken Hill would be a great place to do it. I had some experience working in a rural hospital after completing my medical degree back in Canada and I loved it.*

*In my current role I oversee the Flying Doctor's primary care services in Broken Hill. When I'm not working in one of our GP clinics, I'm providing clinical support to our team of nurses, GPs and other health practitioners.*

*Two areas of my role that I'm particularly passionate about are education and research. A big priority for me is creating a culture where we are constantly learning from each other as a team.*

*I love teaching and I believe that if I can instil a love of General Practice in the registrars who complete their training with us, I can help patients I will never get to see. I also think if we do education well, we will attract people to Broken Hill who want to learn about rural and remote medicine and build the foundations for our future workforce.*

*Research is another really important part of setting the Royal Flying Doctor Service up for the future. I'm excited about a project we're working on in collaboration with Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health looking at how we can better support patients who use our Retrieval Service on a regular basis.*

*Broken Hill is a great place to live and work. There are lots of wonderful hikes and things to see in and around town. There's always something going on here, too. I learned Japanese calligraphy recently at our Broken Hill Wellbeing Place and I'm part of a ukulele group that meets there every fortnight. I hope to be here for a long time yet."*





Outback Car Trek 2021 pit stop on route in remote NSW.

# Our Supporters

**Over the last year our supporters have had an enormous impact on the lives of rural, regional and remote communities.**

Through these challenging times, we have seen an exceptional level of support from our donors. They have enabled us to provide the highest standards of healthcare while also trialling innovative new health initiatives that address critical health needs in the outback.

Whether a supporter is a generous individual, local community fundraiser, a volunteer who gives their time, or an individual who has visited one of our bases, every type of support makes a difference. Our supporters have ensured we can continue to provide resilient and resourceful healthcare services to people of the bush and spread awareness of the challenges faced by these communities.

Without our supporters, many of our crucial programs would simply not exist. Donors are helping close the gap in health outcomes between rural and metropolitan Australians. We would also like to thank everyone who took time out of their busy day to take part in our confidential supporter survey. We're grateful to learn more about why people choose to stand with outback communities, what they care about, how they want to be involved and how we can share the impact of their support. We've listened to the feedback and look forward to taking action over the next year as we begin to implement some of the suggestions to improve the way we connect our donors to our work.

Throughout the pandemic, our supporters have continued to stand with outback families and communities to help keep them safe. This incredible community has raised \$20.7 million towards frontline healthcare services across our section.

Our philanthropic donors have continued to make an enormous impact on our service delivery and the direction of our organisation. Donors wanting to support us long-term have enabled us to grow exciting pilot projects into fully-fledged health services to deepen our impact on the long-term health of our communities. You can read more about this on page 36.

We were so pleased to see the Outback Car Trek take to the roads again this year after being paused, raising vital funds for our core health services. Traversing NSW, trekkers visited both our Dubbo and Broken Hill bases to meet our frontline staff delivering on our mission. You can read more on page 35.

A heartfelt thank you to every one of our supporters who are making a tangible impact on the lives of remote Australians.



James Hackney challenged himself to cycle over 3,000km from Uluru to Sydney to raise funds.



## Hear from our supporters



*"I hoped that this fundraising could be an opportunity for us to get together and do something good, help the Royal Flying Doctor Service and help Aussies who live in regional Australia. We are together as one."* - Richard Wu hosted an 'Outback Morning Tea' in 2021.



*"I joined a group of dedicated and extraordinary individuals committed to raising funds for the local community in Dubbo. It is very rewarding see the impact of our efforts on the health outcomes of regional NSW."* - Cecelia Hutchinson-Parsons, President of the Dubbo Support Group since 2020.



*"Whilst travelling in the outback last year, we came to fully appreciate why the Flying Doctor is so valued in remote areas. Outback families deserve the same healthcare as those of us who live in metropolitan areas. Without the Royal Flying Doctor Service, this would not be possible."*  
- Keith and Fiona Fone have been supporting as dedicated donors since 2011.



*"Health of every community is important to me. Coming from America, I've seen massive inequalities when it comes to access to healthcare. I love that Australians are looking after one another, regardless of where they are located. If I can make things just a little bit easier for someone else, then I am more than happy to do it."* - Liz Lee, Regular Giving Supporter since 2020.



*"I regularly give to the Royal Flying Doctor Service to save someone's life from what could've killed them or made them unable to provide for their families. It's better to give a little money regularly and make back many times the contentment knowing I helped someone regain their quality of life."* - Isaac Kikkert, Regular Giving Supporter since 2020.



*"I decided to volunteer after getting lost on a driving holiday near Bindarra Station (2 hours out of Broken Hill). It dawned on me how remote the outback is. I have the utmost appreciation of my privileged access to healthcare in the city. Everyone should get the finest healthcare no matter their geographical location."* - Judy Nutman White, Volunteer since 2010.

## Our community

Our community supporters have gone above and beyond to raise funds and bring healthcare to rural, regional and remote Australians, even despite the challenges of a COVID-19 world. This continued dedication and generous support means everything to families living, working or travelling in the outback who would otherwise lack access to vital healthcare services.

As we experienced in 2020, many fundraising events were cancelled or rescheduled, including the Broken Hill Woman's Auxiliary Gala Ball, Silver City Bush Treadler's annual bike ride, City to Surf and Sydney Half Marathon. However,

despite the challenges, some events were able to go ahead as restrictions allowed, including the Outback Car Trek and Bright Smiles Charity Ride.

We thank everyone that got out there and pushed themselves to the limit with fitness challenges or brought together small groups of friends and colleagues to enjoy a cup of tea in support of outback communities. This commitment to raising funds, no matter how difficult the circumstances, is so inspiring and so appreciated. These contributions are reassuring outback communities that the Flying Doctor is there to keep them safe.



### Dubbo Support Group

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Dubbo Support Group continued to tirelessly fundraise by running raffles and collecting donations from generous locals. This year, the Dubbo Support Group joined in celebrating 20 years of Royal Flying Doctor Service Base Operations in Dubbo.



### Silver City Bush Treadlers

Since 1996, a team of avid cyclists from Broken Hill have explored some of the roughest roads and spectacular landscapes of the Australian outback on an annual 2-week bicycle ride to raise funds for the Flying Doctor. Due to COVID-19, the Treadlers were unable to ride in 2020 and 2021 but continue to fundraise and support the Flying Doctor.



### Friends in the UK

Based in London, the Friends in the UK support group raises funds for outback Australians through events and gifts from individuals. Due to COVID-19, they were not able to hold their annual Gala ball. However, to keep their supporters informed we jointly hosted a virtual supporter event showcasing the impact of our mental health team on communities in the outback.



### Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary

Every year, our long-standing supporters, the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary, raise significant funds through various activities, including raffles and their world-famous Christmas Puddings. This year funds raised provided vital support for the new Broken Hill Wellbeing Place, an innovative mental health initiative.

**\$70,000 raised**



### Outback Car Trek

**Participants: 203**

Back in action, the Outback Car Trek 2021 took off in June from West Wyalong. Each year, trekkers from across the country come together to raise critical funds to bring life-saving healthcare to isolated communities that call the outback home. The trekkers were happy to be reunited after the 2020 Trek was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**\$1,416,978.40 raised so far**



### Bright Smiles Charity Ride

**Participants: 19**

The 5th Bright Smiles Charity Ride started in the Southern Highlands in April. Over four days, participants headed through the Snowy Mountains finishing in Bowral. Funds raised help to provide much-needed dental care to remote and rural Australians.

**\$37,000 raised**



### Outback Air Race

**Participants: 41 teams**

Held every three years, the Outback Air Race is a time trial event that takes place over two weeks through the remote Australian outback. Pilots and teams take on the adventure of a navigational challenge. The event has been postponed until August 2022 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**\$42,000 raised**



### Outback Morning Tea

**Participants: 40 groups**

March saw the much-anticipated launch of the inaugural Outback Morning Tea. Groups of friends, family and colleagues gathered together to host a home-baked morning tea. Raising much-needed funds to bring life-saving healthcare to all Australians, no matter how remote.

**\$30,000 raised**



### TOMRA Return and Earn

**Participants: 600 locations across NSW**

A unique partnership saw TOMRA Return and Earn recycling program nominate us as their sole 2021 charity partner. Over seven months participants were able to select to donate 10 cents for each bottle or can they recycled to help isolated outback families.

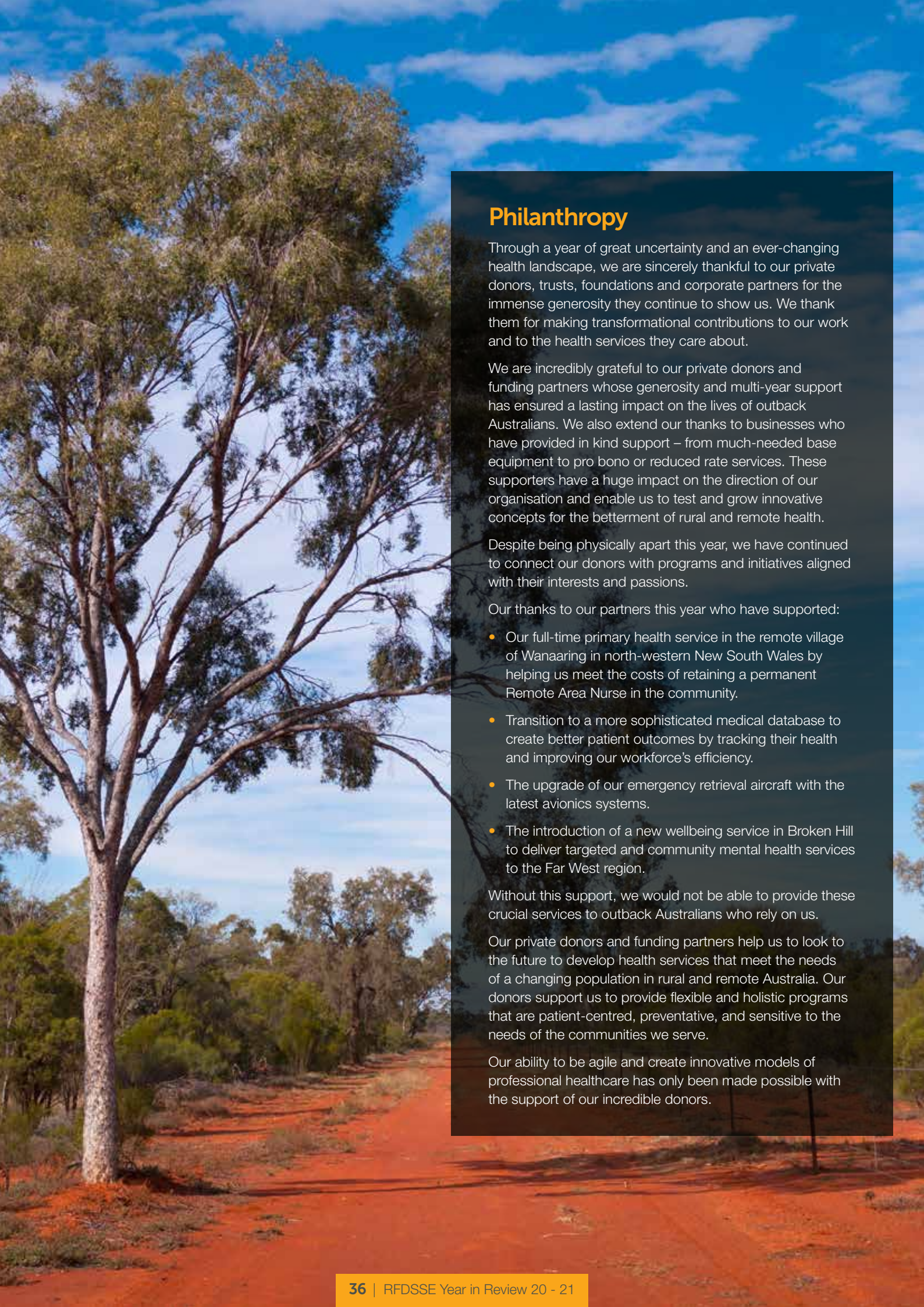
**\$85,000 raised**



### Khan's Supa IGA

Community supermarket Khans IGA continued to show their incredible support for outback communities over the last year through various community events and generous customer donations. This year, their generous support has made a difference to our new, innovative mental health initiative, the Lightning Ridge Wellbeing Place.

**\$15,859.89 raised**



## Philanthropy

Through a year of great uncertainty and an ever-changing health landscape, we are sincerely thankful to our private donors, trusts, foundations and corporate partners for the immense generosity they continue to show us. We thank them for making transformational contributions to our work and to the health services they care about.

We are incredibly grateful to our private donors and funding partners whose generosity and multi-year support has ensured a lasting impact on the lives of outback Australians. We also extend our thanks to businesses who have provided in kind support – from much-needed base equipment to pro bono or reduced rate services. These supporters have a huge impact on the direction of our organisation and enable us to test and grow innovative concepts for the betterment of rural and remote health.

Despite being physically apart this year, we have continued to connect our donors with programs and initiatives aligned with their interests and passions.

Our thanks to our partners this year who have supported:

- Our full-time primary health service in the remote village of Wanaaring in north-western New South Wales by helping us meet the costs of retaining a permanent Remote Area Nurse in the community.
- Transition to a more sophisticated medical database to create better patient outcomes by tracking their health and improving our workforce's efficiency.
- The upgrade of our emergency retrieval aircraft with the latest avionics systems.
- The introduction of a new wellbeing service in Broken Hill to deliver targeted and community mental health services to the Far West region.

Without this support, we would not be able to provide these crucial services to outback Australians who rely on us.

Our private donors and funding partners help us to look to the future to develop health services that meet the needs of a changing population in rural and remote Australia. Our donors support us to provide flexible and holistic programs that are patient-centred, preventative, and sensitive to the needs of the communities we serve.

Our ability to be agile and create innovative models of professional healthcare has only been made possible with the support of our incredible donors.



Our Mobile Primary Health Service which supports the Far West.

## Our donors are getting behind new primary health services to benefit outback Australians

As the leading cause of ill health and death throughout the country, chronic illness in Australia is a pressing concern. Not only do people in rural and remote Australia display an increased level of health risk factors resulting in a higher prevalence of chronic disease, they also have poorer access to primary care services to address these conditions.

Our donors have got behind a unique and flexible model of care, which aims to reduce disease prevalence and help people to better manage ongoing conditions so that they can stay at home with their families for longer.

A grant from a charitable foundation enabled us to purchase a LandCruiser Prado, which we fitted out with the latest medical equipment and supplies. This new vehicle has been visiting remote parts of the Far West to support people living with chronic illness as a pilot program this year. Our Mobile Primary Health Service allows us to provide longer consults to our patients, continuity of care and access to a multidisciplinary health team between our fly-in-fly-out clinics. We are also now able to visit new communities that have been typically hard to reach by our aircraft.

This service goes right to the door of our communities to offer screening and treatment for chronic diseases such as diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and heart disease. Our nurses have also focused on health promotion



and education to prevent chronic illness from presenting in remote communities. This new service, which is breaking down barriers to healthcare such as access, enables our staff to recognise changes in patients' health much earlier due to more frequent and specialised care. As a result, we are setting up communities for longer and healthier lives.

This service has had some very promising results and positive feedback from our communities in its first year. For example, after a series of consultations with one of our nurses, one patient managed to reduce their blood sugar levels to a point where they can now safely manage their condition day-to-day themselves. This new service also improves patient wellbeing by reducing the pain and stress associated with living with chronic conditions and finding the right care.

We are delighted that a longstanding private foundation has committed support to this new initiative for up to five years. This will allow us to truly create demonstrable change for individuals living with chronic conditions and improve the health of the whole community. Our sincere thanks go out to our partners who have been inspired by this work and who are standing with us to grow this pilot program into a fully-fledged Mobile Primary Health Service in the coming years.



Primary Health Nurse, Belinda Gentle, prepares for a day on the road supporting outback communities.

# Supporter profile: Dr Sandra L J Johnson

The big-hearted and visionary supporters that choose to leave a gift in their Will to the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) are helping ensure that we will be able to continue providing essential healthcare to rural, regional and remote Australian communities for generations to come.

Even as a young child, Dr Sandra L J Johnson wanted to become a doctor.

***“I am fascinated with the functioning of the human body. It is such a miraculous design. Once I qualified as a doctor, it felt like an enormous privilege to help others when they were vulnerable or injured. I still feel this way about my work.”***

Dr Johnson is a developmental paediatrician and Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Sydney Medical School in the Children’s Hospital at Westmead Clinical School.

Soon after arriving in Australia from Cape Town, South Africa, Sandra learned about our work. Having worked in a remote Mission Hospital in Lesotho earlier in her career with her late brother Dr Clarence Johnson, she was instantly drawn to the work the Flying Doctor does for outback communities. ***“Many people in the outback are farming and Indigenous communities. Farmers provide the food that we depend on. We need to look after them and their families.”***

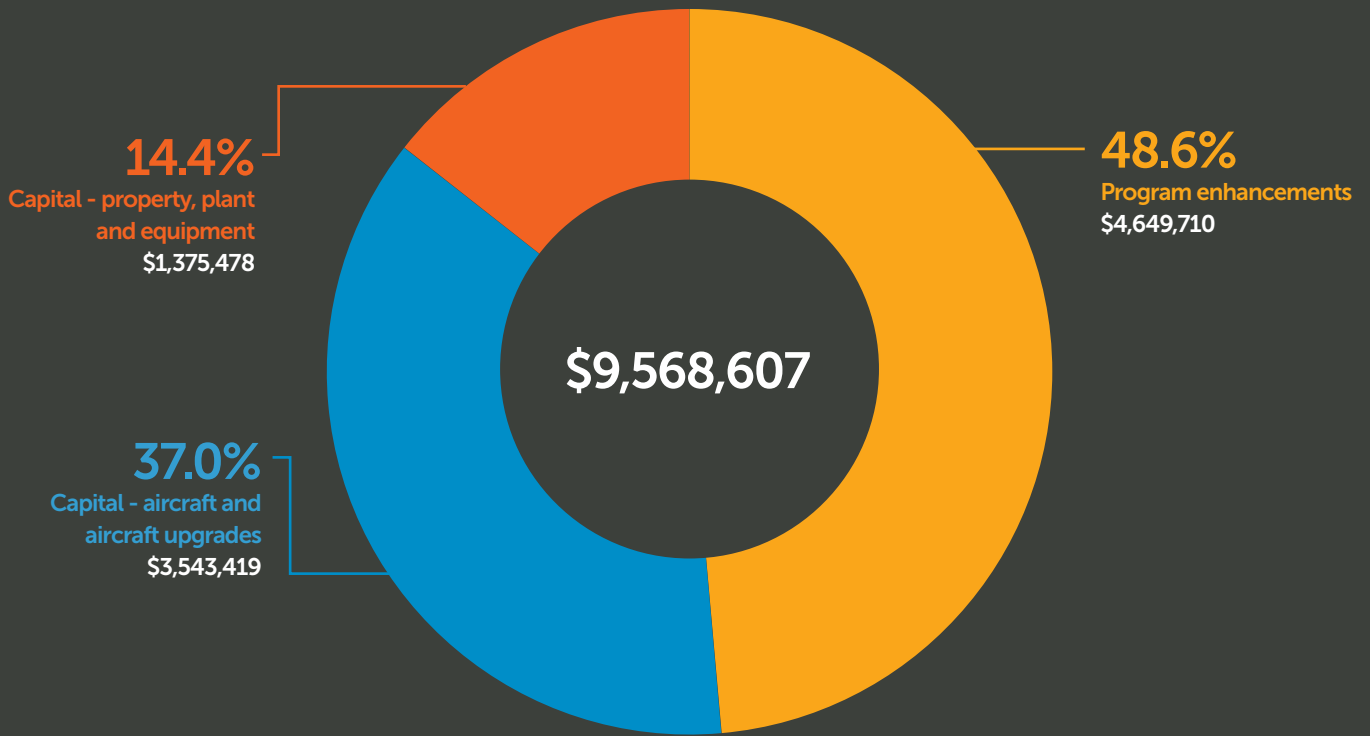
Sandra is passionate about her work and believes that we should provide the best possible access to medical and healthcare to everyone, no matter where they live. She has chosen to leave a gift in her Will to the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section).

***“I believe that this allows me to leave a legacy to support a service that I believe in and which relates directly to my chosen and beloved career, Medicine. I believe in a fair society. One’s location or position in life should not be the factor that determines whether one receives good healthcare. Every human being has the right to be cared for and to be given treatment when they are sick or injured.”***



# Where our donor funding is used

To 30 June 2021  
(After marketing and fundraising costs have been met)



Category	Amount	Percentage
Program enhancements	\$4,649,710	48.6%
Capital - aircraft & aircraft upgrades	\$3,543,419	37.0%
Capital - property, plant & equipment	\$1,375,478	14.4%
	\$9,568,607	100.00%

# Our Funding

## Tourism

One of the important revenue streams for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) is our tourism division comprising the Dubbo Visitor Experience, Outback Heritage Experience in Broken Hill and online merchandise store.

The Visitor Experience provides tours, education programs, function/event opportunities, a merchandise store and in-house Café, while the Outback Heritage Experience (Bruce Langford Visitor Centre) offers behind the scenes guided tours, the opportunity to see the operational centre and a merchandise store.

Despite having to manage significant challenges due to the pandemic, our tourism experiences in Dubbo and Broken Hill experienced some of their busiest times during 2020/21, with more Australians than ever travelling to regional areas.

In 2020/21, which was its first full year of operation, the highly immersive and interactive Dubbo Visitor Experience saw more than 50,000 people through its doors. On its busiest single day in the July 2020 school holidays following

the start of the pandemic, around 700 children and adults visited the attraction – well above expectations. To adhere to strict COVID-safe protocols introduced during the pandemic, every visitor was temperature-checked and the interactive displays throughout the exhibitions were regularly sanitised. A large majority of visitors to the Dubbo attraction purchased the Great Big Adventure Pass, a new multi-ticket which also provides access to Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Old Dubbo Gaol and the Wellington Caves.

While some events were able to be held in the new Dubbo facility, COVID-19 restrictions made hosting many functions problematic. In the coming year, the team aims to grow the event business once restrictions are lifted. Similarly, the education program at the Dubbo Visitor Experience was impacted significantly by the pandemic. An Education Program Officer was employed in the last year and as restrictions lift, there are plans to also grow this part of the business.

In Broken Hill, COVID-19 led to a resurgence in tourists to the area and to the Outback Heritage Experience located at our base, where visitor numbers increased dramatically. The restoration of three planes at this site in the past year significantly enhanced the tourism experience for visitors. Further improvements are planned for this important tourist attraction in the coming years.

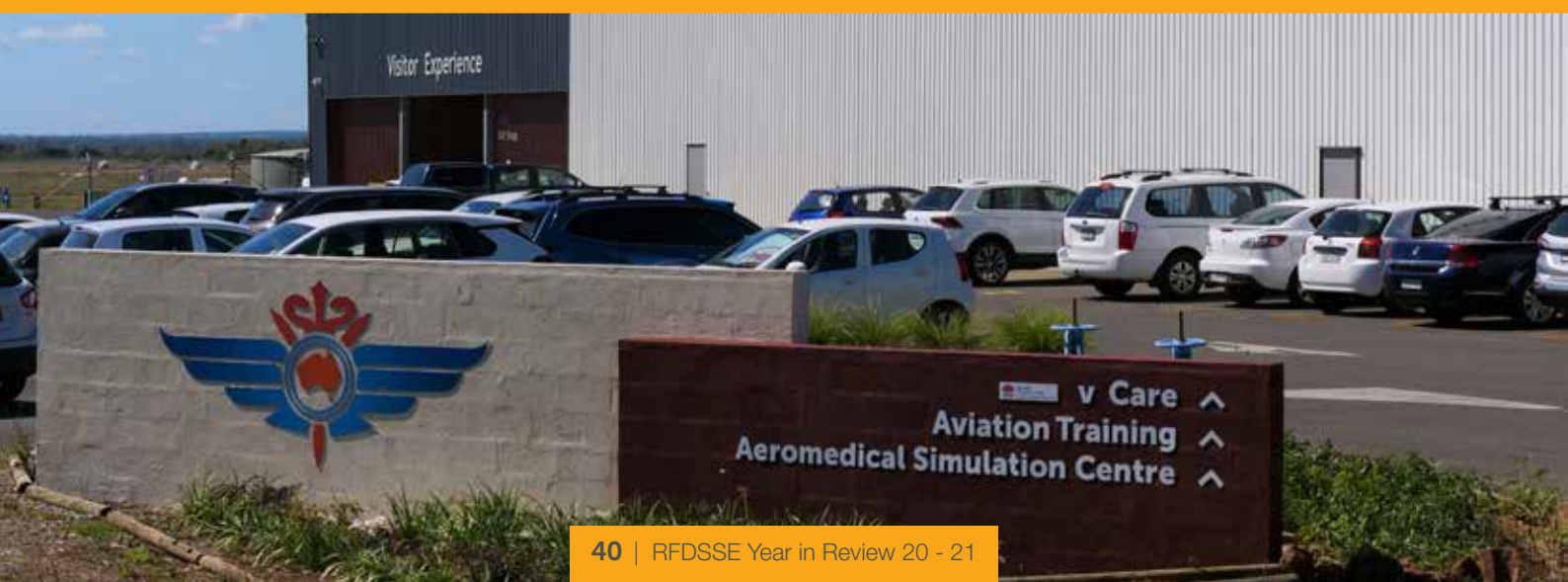
### Broken Hill Outback Heritage Experience

	FY2021	FY2020
<b>Total admissions</b>	16,788	7,420
<b>Instore customers</b>	10,190	5,665
<b>Doc Shop online customers</b>	2,503	2,255
<b>Xmas catalogue customers</b>	1,302	1,004

### Dubbo Visitor Experience

	FY2021	FY2020*
<b>Total admissions</b>	53,535	9,041
<b>Great Big Adventure Pass tickets</b>	3,668	818
<b>Online ticket sales</b>	2,759	341

\*attraction was not open the full year







## Government funding

Approximately two thirds of funding for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section) comes from Commonwealth and State government grants.

Without this significant government assistance, many of the communities and people we support would have limited access to the vital healthcare services they need to lead productive and healthy lives.

Funding from the Commonwealth and State government supports services including our emergency retrieval service, as well as primary health clinics and oral health and mental health programs we run in remote communities.

State government grants also fund the Rural Aerial Health Service (RAHS), which operates from our Bankstown and Dubbo Bases, as well dental programs we deliver in partnership with Maari Ma Aboriginal Health Service, the Far West Local Health District and Corrections Health Service in Broken Hill and Ivanhoe.

The Service has been able to deliver additional programs with funding provided through the Western NSW Primary Health Network. These programs include a number of mental health and alcohol & other drugs initiatives.

## Contracts

Government contracts such as agreements for emergency and non-emergency transport with NSW Health, Ambulance NSW and Ambulance Tasmania are vital to the future sustainability of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section).

These contacts (which make up close to 40% of our funding) help to ensure we can deliver services on behalf of other health service providers and organisations.

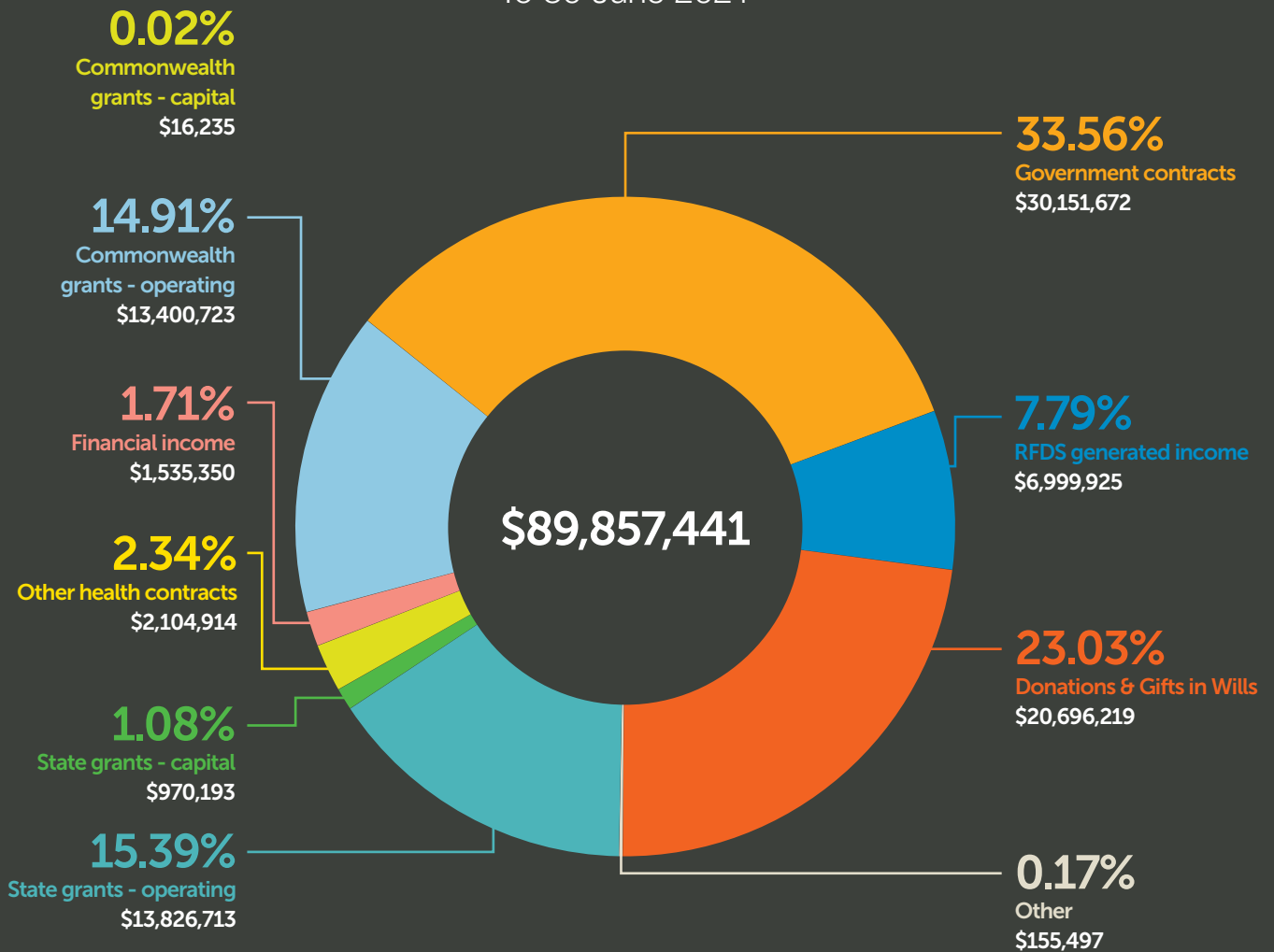
Revenue generated from commercial contracts and partnerships is reinvested to fill funding gaps and increase economies of scale across our traditional services and programs.

This year, as per the previous year, we continued to invest heavily in new staff and equipment – as we faced the evolving challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were able to shift the way some services were delivered, as our teams responded to community need and used some funding to increase services in a different way, such as via increased telehealth sessions.

Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Service) teams also worked collaboratively with Far West Local Health District, Maari Ma and the Commonwealth to commence a vaccine rollout program to all communities within our network. The COVID-19 situation will continue to be monitored with service plans being developed that can be activated should this service need to be expanded.

# Where our funding comes from

To 30 June 2021



Source	Revenue	Percentage
Government contracts	\$30,151,672	33.56%
RFDS generated income	\$6,999,925	7.79%
Donations & Gifts in Wills	\$20,696,219	23.03%
Other	\$155,497	0.17%
State grants - operating	\$13,826,713	15.39%
State grants - capital	\$970,193	1.08%
Other health contracts	\$2,104,914	2.34%
Financial income	\$1,535,350	1.71%
Commonwealth grants - operating	\$13,400,723	14.91%
Commonwealth grants - capital	\$16,235	0.02%
	\$89,857,441	100.00%

# Government and Corporate Supporters

## Funding Partners



## National Major Partners



## National Community Partner



## Corporate & Community Partners



## Commercial Supporters



# Trusts and Foundations

- Allen Family Foundation
- Bruce and Joy Reid Trust
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Funded by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, through the Eldon & Anne Foote Trust
- Maple-Brown Family Foundation
- McGrath Foundation
- Skipper-Jacobs Charitable Trust
- The Knappick Foundation
- The Profield Foundation
- The Rydge Foundation
- The Vernon Foundation

# How you can help

Our work is not possible without the generosity of individuals, corporations, the government and the community. We thank all the kind supporters of the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (South Eastern Section). With your contributions we have proudly served outback Australians for more than 90 years. Help us continue this vital work well into the future by making a donation.

Send your donation to:

Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia  
(South Eastern Section)  
Reply Paid 3537  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Phone: 1300 669 569

Email: [supporter@rfdsse.org.au](mailto:supporter@rfdsse.org.au)

Donate: [flyingdoctor.org.au](http://flyingdoctor.org.au) to make your donation online.



**Royal Flying Doctor Service**  
SOUTH EASTERN SECTION

#### **Bankstown Base**

Hangar 276, Airport Ave  
Bankstown Airport NSW 2200  
T: 02 9941 8880

#### **Broken Hill Base and Visitors' Centre**

Broken Hill Airport, Airport Rd,  
Broken Hill NSW 2880  
T: 08 8080 3777

#### **Dubbo Base**

RFDS Dubbo Hangar  
9R Cooreena Road (Judy Jakins Drive)  
Dubbo NSW 2830  
T: 02 6841 2555

#### **Dubbo RFDS Visitor Experience**

21 Judy Jakins Drive  
Dubbo NSW 2830  
T: 1800 847 487

#### **Mascot Base**

Cnr Ross Smith Ave & Eleventh St,  
Sydney Airport  
Mascot NSW 2020  
T: 02 9941 8880

#### **Sydney Office**

Level 5, 418A Elizabeth Street,  
Surry Hills NSW 2010  
T: 02 9941 8859  
E: [enquiries@rfdsse.org.au](mailto:enquiries@rfdsse.org.au)

## Connect with us



1300 669 569



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