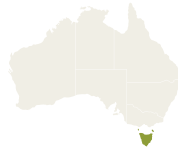


Tasmanian Section



PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

RFDS Tasmania believes that people who live in rural and remote areas of the state should have equity of access to city people for quality health care, and the RFDS needs to play a strong role in advocating and achieving this objective.

We do this by supporting the provision of an aeromedical service, in partnership with Ambulance Tasmania, from our Launceston Base and through the delivery of primary health care services around the State.

Our primary health care services are designed and implemented in partnership with communities and in particular, with rural and remote local governments to meet local gaps and align outcomes.

Over the last year, several important primary health care services have been established in rural and regional Tasmania. These include:

- > an oral health outreach service, funded by the Commonwealth Government and supported by donors;
- > a program that works closely with local doctors in five country districts to provide extra assistance to those living with chronic health conditions. This program is supported by Primary Health Tasmania under the Primary Health Networks Program – an Australian Government initiative; and,
- > a mobile patient transfer service for the road transport of non-acute patients including bed to bed transfers in conjunction with RFDS aircraft.

Growth in the services provided by RFDS Tasmania has seen staff numbers increase to 28, some of whom are located at the Launceston Base, while others work from

regional centres. An additional hangar facility at Launceston Airport was recently opened to accommodate staff and house RFDS road vehicles.

RFDS Tasmania will continue to address the disparity in health services particularly the barriers of access for people living in rural and remote Tasmania. In doing this we will address the gaps and not seek to compete with existing services. Wherever possible we will, as a trusted not-for-profit organisation, endeavour to work with all levels of government and private practitioners.

During the year we have continued to enjoy the enthusiastic support of our Patron, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AC, Governor of Tasmania, and acknowledge the Governor's encouragement for work in oral health for rural based children.

We were pleased that a well-deserved Order of Australia honour was awarded to Board member, Dr Tim Mooney AM.

Finally, we would like to thank our donors, volunteers, our dedicated Board and our committed staff who, together, make our health care work in Tasmania possible, especially our recent significant expansion of services.

Malcolm White
President

John Kirwan
Chief Executive Officer



Harriet Jory, RFDS Rural & Physical Health Worker and Mr Rhys Beattie.



The Right as Rain team at Wings & Things.



Stephen Stone, RFDS Rural & Physical Health Worker trains a participant.

KEY OUTCOMES

Our vision in Tasmania is to improve the health outcomes for all Tasmanians with a specific focus on rural and remote areas.

During the past 12 months, RFDS Tasmania has expanded its service delivery with the provision of new primary health programs and the establishment of a non-emergency patient transport service.

Primary Health Tasmania commissioned RFDS Tasmania and a consortium of local government councils to deliver improved health outcomes for people living in the municipalities of Dorset, Break O'Day, Glamorgan Spring Bay, George Town and Flinders Island.

The primary health care program is designed to address chronic health conditions in rural and remote areas, including mental illness, cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and dementia. The services are delivered to both individuals and the community by Rural Health Workers, Physical Health Workers and Mental Health Workers. The program is supported by Primary Health Tasmania under the Primary Health Networks program, an Australian Government initiative.

In April 2017, the Hon Dr David Gillespie MP announced national funding to provide eligible residents living in rural and remote communities across Australia with increased dental services to tackle the disparity that exists between the city and bush.

The Commonwealth-funded dental outreach program has since been established in Tasmania and sits under the banner of Mobile Dental Care. The program is designed to focus on those rural and remote communities that are currently unable to access existing services. It is being provided within a flexible service structure and delivered in communities of disadvantage across the state.

Right: Zoe Page, RFDS Outback Adventure Fundraiser – Photo courtesy of the Examiner Newspaper.



East Launceston Primary School student enjoying the Victorian flight simulator.



2016 scholarship recipients, Dr Melanie Withers, Brianna Leaman and Olivia Coyne.

The RFDS has also established a new non-emergency road patient transport service for low acuity patients across Tasmania. The service is an integral part of the health care system and designed to move patients from home to hospital, between hospitals, to specialist medical appointments and in addition, for domestic and aged care facility transfers.

Mobile Patient Care will be integrated with RFDS' aeromedical services to provide a seamless transition from bed to bed across Australia with minimal disruption whilst maintaining the continuity of patient care.

The Right as Rain project run in partnership with Healthy Tasmania has been designed to improve health equity in rural and remote Tasmania. The program focuses on early detection, disease prevention and management through health promotion activities at community events in rural areas of the state. The Right as Rain team flew in a vaccination specialist to the Huon Show to consult with the local community while men's health was tackled at the Flinders Island Show and head lice treatment focused on at Wings and Things, George Town.



MAJOR EVENTS

RFDS Tasmania offers six annual scholarships for medical, nursing and dental students to encourage future involvement in rural and remote medicine, especially here in Tasmania.

A scholarship presentation took place at the Launceston Base to congratulate Dr Melanie Withers who was awarded the Fred McKay Medical Student Scholarship, Olivia Coyne who was nominated as the Robin Miller RFDS Nursing Scholar and Brianna Leaman who was selected as the John Flynn Dental Assistant recipient.

Congratulations to Dariel Roper, Ashleigh Gibson and Hannah Nichol who won the Commercial Travellers Association (CTA) Student Scholarships.

The Look! Up in the Sky educational program developed by RFDS Victoria and delivered in Tasmanian schools is designed to teach primary school students about the important contribution that the RFDS makes to those who live, work and travel throughout Australia.

During the year, RFDS Victoria Program Manager – Education, Tom Ryan toured Tasmanian schools with the interactive simulator to bring the educational program to life. 68 classes from 18 schools participated in the engagement sessions and simulator experience.

Zoe Page, Community Engagement Officer from the Launceston Clinical School at the University of Tasmania walked the Larapinta Trail in the iconic Red Centre of Australia to raise funds for the Flying Doctor in Tasmania. We salute Zoe for her fundraising efforts.