

ROYAL FLYING DOCTORS

Mr Chicken needed the Royal Flying Doctors to help him after he ate too many pavlovas. Read about the Royal Flying Doctors below and then answer the questions about them.

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The Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS) is the largest air medical service in the world. It allows doctors to visit patients in rural, remote and regional areas of Australia who cannot get to a doctor due to the vast distances of the Outback.

Started by Reverend John Flynn in Victoria in 1918 it was originally the Australian Inland Mission for the Presbyterian Church. Beyond just remote missionary work Flynn wanted to provide hospital care for bush communities. This helped a lot of people but there were still many people unable to access the hospitals he had created.

During World War 1 Flynn was told of the use of planes to transport doctors. By 1928 Flynn had enough funding to establish the Aerial Medical Service in Cloncurry Queensland. This later changed its name to the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Qantas supplied the first aircraft to transport Dr. George Simpson to patients in need. With Arthur Affleck as the pilot the first RFDS call out was to Julia Creek in Central Queensland which was almost 150 Kilometres from Cloncurry.

Using radio communication, which Flynn also pioneered, the 1st year of the RFDS saw them make over 50 flights to people in need. Today the RFDS treats over 1000 medical and dental patients a day with 77 planes, 23 airport bases and 140 road vehicles to assist with transport of patients. It is a registered charity and relies heavily on donations as not all of its operating costs are covered by the funding it receives from the government.

The RFDS is a vital part of the Australian medical system and has saved hundreds of thousands of lives over the last century. You may want to find out more about this organisation or organise a charity fundraiser to help support the great work that they do.

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What does RFDS stand for?