

About the Flying Doctor Outback Car Trek

Proudly Supporting  Royal Flying Doctor Service

30 TREKS

\$30 MILLION



Over the past 29 Treks the Outback Car Trek has raised more than \$28.3 million for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and to celebrate the occasion of our 30th Trek we have our sights set on raising \$30,000,000 for the RFDS. Since 1990 Trekkers have travelled an average of 4,100 kms during June each year to keep the RFDS in the air and to make sure that the "Mantle of Safety" that the Reverend John Flynn first envisaged in 1928 remains a reality.

There is an ever increasing demand placed upon the RFDS to take the finest care to the furthest corner, with a corresponding increased demand on funding. This is where the Outback Car Trek plays such an important role for the RFDS. Funds raised by the Outback Car Trek are used to buy vital equipment for the RFDS, with a fully equipped plane now costing in excess of \$7.5 million.



Trek is not a race or a rally, there are no time trials, and the cars are predominantly 2WD vehicles predating the Holden Commodore (1978) and the XD Falcon (1979) that have been specifically toughened to withstand the rigors of outback driving. The only competitive nature of the event is about which car and team can raise the most funds and participants are encouraged to enjoy the journey and the hospitality of the towns and small communities they pass through. Every year the Trek sets a new route, providing a great reason to travel through various areas of Australia.



For further information regarding the **Outback Car Trek**:
 Please contact Bill Patrick on 0418 626 799
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 visit: www.outbackcartrek.com.au



THE OUTBACK CAR TREK

29 years proudly raising funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service



26,863,558 kilometres – the distance the RFDS fleet flew last year

That's the equivalent of 34 trips to the moon and back.



More facts about the Royal Flying Doctor Service

- 335,125 Patient Contacts
- 88,188 patients in rural and remote areas used the telehealth services
- 16,209 Nurse, GP and Dental clinics were conducted across Australia
- 2,338 Medical Chests in use
- 918 Patients are helped every single day of the year
- 124 Healthcare Vehicles
- 71 Aircraft
- 44 Clinics are held everyday
- 23 Air Bases
- One person every 2 minutes is helped by the RFDS

Access to mental health in the Country



Good mental health is important for everyone and while people living in country Australia are often characterised as being naturally resilient, like everyone they can experience tough times. In 2017/18 RFDS held 13,488 mental health consultations around the country.

Through funding provided by governments and donors, the RFDS works to bridge the gap in access to mental health services. RFDS provides a variety of mental health services ranging from visiting mental health clinics, 24 hour telehealth services, through to emergency air transfers of people requiring city based acute care.

In early 2017 the Royal Flying Doctor Service released the research paper "Mental Health in Rural and Remote Communities". This research reveals remote Australians die on average from suicide at twice the rate of city people, yet are only able to access mental health services at a fifth of the rate of city people.

The research shows there is no difference in common mental health risk factors of family history, stressful events, substance use, and health problems between city and bush, country residents risk exacerbated mental illness because of insufficient early intervention and prevention services.

You can request a copy of the paper via email to billp@outbackcartrek.com.au. RFDS CEO Martin Laverty said "One in five Australians experience a mental disorder each year. In remote and rural Australia, that means 960,000 each year deal with their mental health. Yet country people can't access the same services as people in the city."



Life Can Shatter in a Heartbeat



When Mel took her 11-week old baby daughter Keiley to the hospital with breathing difficulties, she never expected the shocking turn of events. Suddenly, while Keiley was being monitored by doctors, she stopped breathing and went into cardiac arrest. "It was terrifying. I stood there and watched the doctor thump her tiny chest to bring her back to life, a million things running through my mind," Mel said. She quickly discovered that Keiley needed urgent specialist attention which wasn't available in their regional town. They couldn't risk the five-hour drive to a major hospital, with mobile phone black spots along the way, in fear that Keiley may stop breathing again and not being able to reach help. For families like Mel's, living in remote, rural and regional Australia, the Royal Flying Doctor Service can be the difference between life and death. "It felt like a lifetime" Mel recalls. "The doctors told me she was unresponsive for about 30 seconds but to me it felt like a lifetime. I thought she was dying."

Once Keiley had regained consciousness and was stable she was transferred to the paediatrics ward where she was monitored for oxygen levels, received specialist care and underwent tests. All tests showed she was okay to return home as she seemed fine. But Mel was frightened and wanted to find answers. Her maternal instinct told her something was wrong. She felt there was no time to waste when her baby's life was at stake. Thankfully, there was another choice. The Royal Flying Doctor Service team were immediately mobilised to transfer Keiley to Westmead Children's Hospital in Sydney where Mel and Christopher could get urgent, specialist care for Keiley.



When faced with life and death emergencies, your support can ensure families get the urgent help they need. The specialised intensive care unit on board the Flying Doctor aircraft allowed flight nurse Brendon to monitor Keiley's vital signs throughout the flight and act quickly if there was any threat to her life. She was in safe hands through every minute of her trip. It can cost \$8,000 for a vital signs monitor, like the one used to monitor and maintain Keiley's heart rate, blood pressure, ECG and respiratory rate during the flight. Every aircraft is fitted with at least one monitor. "Living in a regional area with a child who has a life-threatening medical condition can be frightening but knowing that the Flying Doctor was able to save her life that day and were there for us when we desperately needed help, was everything to us." Every Australian, no matter where they live, should have access to excellent medical care.

