

30 July 2010

For immediate release

## **125 reasons to celebrate**

Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) will mark District Nursing Week (August 1 -7) with extra cheer as it celebrates 125 years of caring for the people of Melbourne.

District Nursing Week is an annual opportunity to recognise the many hundreds of district nurses who care for thousands of people in their homes around the clock every day.

This year holds special significance for RDNS – the organisation began in 1885 with just a single nurse visiting the sick poor of Fitzroy on foot.

At that time, a concerned group of citizens established the Melbourne District Nursing Society, as RDNS was originally known, to care for the “sick poor”. Earliest records show that two nurses provided care to 363 needy citizens in 1889.

Today, the organisation employs over 1,500 staff, operates in three states, as well as New Zealand, and each year provides around 1.7 million nursing visits to almost 33,000 people across Greater Melbourne alone.

CEO Dan Romanis says that RDNS is a major pillar underpinning the health system, helping people to remain in their homes for longer and giving them increased independence, choice and control in relation to their healthcare.

“RDNS has evolved into a large, dynamic healthcare organisation that continues to deliver health, hope and greater quality of life to almost 9,500 people every single day of the year,” he says.

“In recent times we have embarked upon a determined course of growth and diversification to establish a broader presence in community healthcare, both in Victoria and beyond.

“RDNS’ success is based on an ability to move with the times. We are committed to ensuring we continue to influence and respond to changes in funding arrangements, as well as government and community needs in order to provide quality care in responsive, timely and effective ways,” Mr Romanis says.

“District Nursing Week acknowledges the people that make that happen on the ground: the incredible nurses and staff who remain rock solid in their commitment, professionalism and dedication to local communities,” he says.

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