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For immediate release

DEMAND RISES FOR HOME NURSES

New figures released in the 2009 Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) Annual Report show that demand continues to rise steadily for home-based nursing care.

The report shows that in the 2008-09 financial year, the healthcare organisation made 1,718,503 nursing visits* to people throughout Greater Melbourne.

The figure represents an increase of 6.5% on the previous year and a significant 26% increase over the past five years.

Other major figures released in the 2009 Annual Report show that:

- 33,215 clients received care from RDNS during the period
- RDNS staff provided 581,503 hours of care to clients
- RDNS clients originated from 146 countries
- Public hospitals provided most referrals for services – 40.1%, followed by general practitioners at 9.8%.

The figures are confirmation that healthcare delivered in people's homes continues to play a critical role in the evolving healthcare landscape.

RDNS' CEO Dan Romanis said that the need for RDNS services will increase further in the future. "Healthcare that fosters and promotes independence, choice and a greater degree of empowerment for those receiving care must be a foundation of healthcare," he said.

"Over many years the care that RDNS provides has shown to be a major contributor to people's health, wellbeing and recovery, due largely to the fact that it is provided at home.

"Our model of healthcare promotes partnership with clients, their families and other healthcare providers; contributes to a higher sense of control for people; and from a broader point of view, is critical in reducing demand in our public hospitals," Mr Romanis said.

"As the push towards self-management and care provided outside of the hospital setting continues, the sort of healthcare we deliver becomes even more critical."

Mr Romanis recently announced that the 124 year-old organisation is preparing for a determined period of growth and diversification.

The growth strategy includes expansion into new markets and geographies; a multi-market presence; a more diverse range of services delivered in responsive and flexible ways; and the prospect of mergers and acquisitions.

Mr Romanis emphasised that RDNS will ensure that it continues as a leader in the delivery of services to the public Home and Community Care (HACC) sector and that RDNS remains an important innovator in community healthcare.

The developments come on the back of recent expansion by RDNS into Tasmania and New Zealand, where the organisation is now providing in-home services to Auckland residents.

“This is an exciting period for RDNS: We will continue to enhance our reputation as an innovator in nursing and healthcare and an organisation that offers superior value to clients and customers,” he said.

** ‘Visits’ include face-to-face contacts with clients and ‘client-related contacts’ (activities undertaken on behalf of clients)*

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