

MEDIA RELEASE
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Royal District Nursing Service and Healthways Australia strike 'Australian first' agreement.

Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) and Healthways Australia have entered into an agreement which will lead to the nationwide provision of comprehensive and integrated out-of-hospital nursing and allied health services, together with telephonic and web based health support and telemonitoring.

As a result of the collaboration, patients will have access to integrated care at home that includes nursing, allied health, domiciliary care, care-co-ordination, telephonic and web-based care support and telehealth monitoring.

RDNS is Australia's largest provider of home nursing services and largest employer of district nurses. Its services include general and specialist nursing, and allied healthcare, providing care to people in their homes 24 hours a day.

Healthways Australia is the Australian operations of Healthways International; a global health company providing personalised population health support services in Health and Wellness, Chronic Disease Support, Care Co-Ordination and Corporate Health.

Key features of the Healthways service include telephone-based support services (nurse and health coach) to improve patients' health and wellbeing and tools for measuring current health, assessing health risks, and preventing future health problems.

RDNS CEO, Mr Dan Romanis said, "This is the first time in Australia that people who are at risk of going to hospital, or have just left hospital, will be able to receive a totally coordinated and integrated approach to care in their home setting.

"A patient being discharged after a hip replacement or heart attack; or coping with an end of life condition will receive the face-to-face care they require, while also being monitored and supported telephonically," he said.

"This model of care offers a unique opportunity to reduce the need for hospitalisation, decrease the average length of stay in hospital, and improve health outcomes for patients.

"Our services will be applicable in all areas of healthcare: rehabilitation, palliative care, aged care, veteran affairs, Hospital in the Home and hospital substitution", Mr Romanis said.

Healthways Australia Managing Director, Mr Timothy Morphy said, "With health reform firmly front and square in everyone's mind, this is exactly the model of healthcare that both Governments and the private sector are calling for."



“For example, seventy per cent of hospital events are now due to chronic disease. We have patients with chronic diseases landing on our hospital doorsteps, putting health professionals under ever-increasing pressure, preventing access for other acute care. They are stabilised

and then discharged and the merry-go-round starts again. Many of these admissions are avoidable,” Mr Morphy said.

“What we require is a new model of care: one that includes coordinated, multi-disciplinary care; sometimes medical in nature but often simply support and monitoring services. Most of these services currently exist but only in a small and fragmented way,” Mr Morphy said.

“This collaboration will change all that.”

“If we can assist people to manage their chronic conditions at home rather than have to go to hospital we can take pressure off hospital emergency departments, slow the growth in escalating costs for governments, health funds and consumers.

“Above all we can seek to improve outcomes for patients,” Mr Morphy said.

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About Royal District Nursing Service

RDNS is Australia's largest provider of home nursing services and largest employer of district nurses. Founded in Melbourne in 1885, RDNS has developed a reputation for delivering high quality health and home care services to people in their own homes. Employing over 1,100 registered nurses, RDNS cares for over 32,000 clients per year and provides a range of services including aged care, out of hospital care, chronic disease management, palliative care and worker health checks. In recent years, RDNS has extended its service delivery beyond the home to include schools, the workplace and community settings. Through its Homeless Persons programme, RDNS remains true to its commitment to taking healthcare to wherever there is a need. Visit www.rdns.com.au for more information

About Healthways

Healthways is a population health company providing personalised wellness, prevention and disease management programs. Since its foundation in 1981, Healthways has been working with and assisting governments, employers, health insurers, hospitals, doctors and above all, individuals; to improve the effectiveness of healthcare, enhance the fundamental care experience and reduce healthcare costs through large-scale health programs adapted and tailored for the local health system. Globally one of the largest providers of population health management, Healthways provides ongoing health analysis and services for over 35 million individuals worldwide in Australia, Europe, North and South America and India. Visit www.healthways.com for more information about Healthways.