

New CEO takes the reins

RDNS has a new Chief Executive Officer - Stephen Muggleton took up the position of CEO on August 22. He replaces Dan Romanis who tendered his resignation in April after 17 years in the job.

Mr Muggleton is a highly respected healthcare CEO with a reputation as an innovative and transformational leader.

RDNS Board Chairman, Paul Montgomery, says that Mr Muggleton's successful career leading health organisations positions him perfectly for heading RDNS, which continues to pursue a growth and diversification agenda.

"We have the utmost confidence that Steve will be best able to lead RDNS through the significant changes that face our sector while delivering on the ambitious goals we have set for our growth."

"The Board has selected Stephen as the person to take up the leadership of RDNS at this most critical time and we look forward to working closely with him as we meet the challenges of the future," Mr Montgomery says.

"It's a privilege to be leading an organisation that has such a strong tradition of providing quality healthcare," Mr Muggleton says.

"The care that RDNS provides is so much more than just outstanding healthcare – it's about kindness, compassion, giving people dignity, hope and reassurance when they most need and least expect it.



RDNS CEO, Stephen Muggleton.

"I'm committed to continuing that tradition and expanding the organisation to provide a wider range of services to a growing and ageing population," he says.

Mr Muggleton commenced his health career as part of a team that commissioned the then largest teaching hospital in New South Wales, the John Hunter Hospital. He stayed at the hospital in a range of leadership roles including six years as Australia's first non-clinical Chair of Surgery.

His subsequent leadership of the Royal Darwin Hospital was marked with a Prime Minister's Award

as Employer of the Year and an Emergency Services Australia Award for Post Disaster Management.

Mr Muggleton was the Executive Director of Blue Care for the last eight years where his efforts to empower front line care staff generated a series of workforce and care innovations.

His leadership contributed to Blue Care being recognised in 2010 with a Premier's Award as a Queensland Great, Q150 Icon status and a Reconciliation Award. Mr Muggleton was the recipient of the inaugural AIM Award as Queensland Not-for-Profit Manager of the Year.

Minister opens museum

In August the Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis MLC, officially opened 'RDNS Reflections', an interactive online museum showcasing 13 decades, 7 themes and over 500 stories, artefacts and news media about RDNS.

The museum is open 24 hours a day, has no admission fee, no queues or need to book ahead, and visitors can stay as long as they wish. A visit to the website museum takes visitors on a rich, colourful and often deeply moving journey into one of Australia's oldest and most respected providers of nursing and healthcare. Each intriguing decade of RDNS' history is covered in the on-line museum.

In opening the museum, Minister Davis played tribute to the long history of RDNS, and its ongoing role. "RDNS Reflections tells a great humanitarian story that should be marked and recorded in this way. It gives us a glimpse of RDNS through the years – of its perseverance and its endurance.

"RDNS plays an important role now and in the future," the Minister told guests. "We welcome the strong and continued



RDNS Chairman Paul Montgomery, Minister Davis and EGM Service Delivery, Ro Hogan.

involvement of RDNS to ensure people get the care that they need," he said.

As well as telling the story of a Melbourne healthcare icon, the museum also tracks the history of Melbourne itself, from the days soon after the gold rush through to modern times.

Virtual museums are fast becoming a popular choice for companies with rich histories who are looking to connect with

their clients, the community and the world in an interactive online setting.

The opening of the museum by Minister Davis coincided with District Nursing Week, an annual opportunity to celebrate district nurses who care for many thousands of people in their homes around the clock every day.

Coming to our census

The Census of Population and Housing aims to accurately count the number of people in Australia, their key characteristics, and the dwellings in which they live. It is conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) once every five years, most recently taking place on August 9. During the Census every household and person in the country was required to answer specific questions on a paper form or online.

RDNS was pleased to have been involved in a joint project with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to endorse the 2011 Census to RDNS' clients in Victoria. The aim of the project was to work with ABS to promote the Census to clients so that they would recognise surveyors. The objective was to alleviate client anxiety which may have been associated with opening the door to strangers. The project also provided the opportunity to promote the '100 years of Census' milestone.

A series of activities were undertaken in the weeks leading up to Census night, including website promotion; media opportunities; the distribution of a flyer to clients explaining the Census and what to expect as well as the distribution of promotional merchandise to clients prior to the Census to increase recognition and awareness.

Client's choice shines

The 'RDNS Nurse of the Year - Client's Choice Award' is an award program in its second year, designed to give RDNS clients the opportunity to acknowledge RDNS nurses who have made a positive impact on their life.

The nomination process invites clients to detail the ways in which their RDNS nurse has enhanced their overall quality of life. With 250 nominations received this year, it was compelling confirmation that RDNS nurses are delivering extraordinary levels of nursing care, encouragement and support each day.

The winner of the 2011 'RDNS Nurse of the Year – Client's Choice Award' is a nurse who has taken on the challenging task of caring for a young boy who requires daily bladder care. Our winning nurse was responsible for the initial assessment of six year old Tom's* needs and commenced his care 12 months ago.

At that time, little Tom was in kindergarten but has since started prep at his local primary school. Our nurse has continued to provide care to Tom in the school environment, a situation which was potentially difficult and awkward.

But with skill, discretion and calm professionalism, our nurse has been able to provide daily bladder care to Tom without any of his friends even being aware of her presence. This has led to a safeguarding of Tom's privacy, an increase in his self-image and stress-free days at school due to his condition being properly managed.

Tom's parents reported in their nomination a significant reduction in their anxiety and the utmost trust and confidence in their nurses skill and advice; they are equally confident as she liaises with Tom's other medical specialists as required.



Lisa Tohovitis receives her award from RDNS Chairman, Paul Montgomery.

The nomination for our winner states that she is "not one to blow her own trumpet" but she "is someone who deserves praise and recognition for dealing with a client in a delicate age group with complex needs that go beyond just physical." The nomination concludes with the words: "We think she is fantastic!"

In presenting the award, RDNS' Board Chairman, Paul Montgomery, concurred: "I can tell you - we think she is fantastic too."

The winner of the 2011 'RDNS Nurse of the Year – Client's Choice Award' is Lisa Tohovitis from RDNS Caulfield.

In receiving her trophy, certificate and cash prize, Lisa humbly expressed her gratitude to her colleagues and managers at RDNS, speaking with warmth and pride about the teamwork that contributes to improving the lives of clients such as Tom.

She also paid her respect to Tom's family for the trust that they have put in her throughout the duration of his care and talked of her sense of privilege at being involved so closely in family situations such as theirs.

*Name changed for privacy reasons.

Lessons from abroad

In 2010 Suzanne Kapp, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Wound Management and Research at the RDNS Helen Macpherson Smith Institute of Community Health was awarded the Mary Evans Scholarship and the Cairnes Lloyd Memorial Fund.

As such, she was able to conduct a European study tour to gain an international perspective on current and future developments in wound management, the aim of which was to inform evidence-based practice, service delivery, education and research at RDNS and the wider wound management community.

Her four week tour provided her with the opportunity to meet with prominent specialists and leaders in the wound care industry and to return with a number of important learnings for the domestic scene. The following is an excerpt from her report.

"I attended a National Health Service (NHS) Seminar, titled 'Making wound care work in an evolving NHS' at Stafford General Hospital; visited a 'Leg Club' (community leg ulcer clinic) in Shoeburyness; visited the Eastbourne Wound Healing Centre and attended the European Wound Management Association conference in Belgium, where I delivered two presentations arising from my research work at the RDNS Helen Macpherson Smith Institute of Community Health.

I spent three days at the Wound Healing Research Unit in Cardiff, where I networked with numerous staff and participated in complex wound clinics at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary and the University Hospital of Wales and while there also experienced nurse-led leg ulcer clinics, wound research trial clinics and inpatient programs for people with or at risk of wounds.

A number of compelling themes arose from my study tour:

Perspectives on enablement

I observed that many UK wound services are increasing their accountability for delivering quality care and ensuring that patients are experiencing positive outcomes. Patient satisfaction is an important focus of data collection. This focus on patient outcomes is not dissimilar to the recent trend in Victoria and at RDNS, associated with the Active Service Model (ASM) framework which seeks to enable clients to participate more in their care.

Care in the community

In the UK, patients typically attend community-based services to access wound management nurse expertise: a model which generates cost savings and improves access for patients and equity in service delivery. The most successful aspects of nurse-led clinics in the UK could inform the development of a patient-centered out-of-home care facility at RDNS, a model which would engage clients in health promotion, effective and efficient treatment, socialisation and participation in their health. Such a facility could also be utilised for staff education, supervision and research.

Interdisciplinary teamwork

The most promising nurse-led models of care and the most innovative and successful multidisciplinary models of care in the UK shared several characteristics. Nurse wound management expertise was high and interdisciplinary collaboration was promoted. This collaboration provided opportunity for shared learning among the team and improved communications with the patient. A model, which physically places the RDNS clinician as a member of the interdisciplinary team, has the potential to improve client outcomes and service delivery.

Shared problems

Conservative Sharp Wound Debridement is a skill which is essential to the successful management of chronic wounds as this intervention removes debris from the wound in preparation to heal. This intervention however cannot always be provided due to the skills required by the clinician. The RDNS Wound Management Clinical Leadership Group is working toward developing an environment which better supports this practice, to improve client outcomes and demonstrate clinical leadership which will have relevance on an international scale.

Global solutions

Anti-microbial dressings, used to treat wounds compromised by bacteria, are widely used at RDNS. Guidelines to assist clinicians with decision making are required and RDNS is the ideal setting for guideline development, education, implementation and testing. Guidelines arising from developments relating to conservative sharp wound debridement would also be highly valued among the international nursing community.

Reflections on my study tour experience suggest that wound management in Europe has developed in ways not dissimilar to that which is occurring in Victoria and at RDNS.

Learnings for RDNS potentially include new ways to monitor and measure the enablement of clients with wounds; the applicability of innovative nurse led models of care; and the need for strategies to promote effective and accessible interdisciplinary care. Opportunities for RDNS include the possibility of leading clinical, quality improvement and research initiatives which have the potential to improve client outcomes and generate reputational gains for the organisation."

A forum for sharing

In 2010, the annual RDNS Industry Forum was initiated as a way of bringing a greater focus to issues specific to RDNS' operations and relevant to industry stakeholders with whom we work.

In August, the second RDNS Industry Forum was held, where we welcomed guests from across the industry to hear keynote speaker Sue Pieters-Hawke. Amongst her impressive array of experiences and professional endeavours, Sue is the author of the bestselling book 'Hazel's Journey', which chronicles the story of her mother's experience with Alzheimer's disease and which has sold more than 50,000 copies.

While enjoying a hearty breakfast, guests were enthralled by the candour and passion with which Sue spoke. She recounted the many lessons that

she has received from her experience caring for her mother, and provided profound insight into what people can expect when confronted with such a situation, and the ways to cope and even conquer the myriad challenges that present themselves.

After her address, Sue was joined by Caroline Mulcahy, Chief Executive of

Carers Victoria and Fiona Hearn, General Manager/Director of Nursing at RDNS (North and West), in a panel discussion to round off a highly engaging morning. Sue then joined RDNS Chairman Paul Montgomery and other guests for an official Chairman's lunch before addressing staff at RDNS' annual Staff Service Awards.



Sue Pieters-Hawke, Caroline Mulcahy, Fiona Hearn.

Time to notify

RDNS is pleased to have entered into an agreement with The National Health Call Centre Network Ltd (NHCCN) to provide telephone support services for the South Australian Health Incident Management program.

The program operates to capture patient-related incidents which occur in the health system in South Australia. This includes incidents and near misses such as those relating to medication, clinical management, hazards, security, documentation, equipment and devices. Until recently, all incidents were captured via a phone-based system (via 1800 NOTIFY) which was supported by a particular software program.

SA Health recently undertook the process of transitioning from the former software to an improved web-based software

program to capture incidents. One of the key advantages of the new system is its user interface, which allows health workers in South Australia to directly log incidents via a web-based portal. This increased accessibility is expected to decrease the number of phone-based incidents reported. However, there remains a substantial requirement for a call reporting and management system. The NHCCN has appointed RDNS to manage that system.

RDNS is pleased to have been appointed as the service provider for receiving and processing calls utilising the new web-based software. RDNS' role is to receive calls, assess and classify each call and record details of the incident directly into the new management system, either at the time of the call or within 60 minutes of the completion of the call. RDNS is

also responsible for returning calls in a timely fashion when callers have left a message (for example, in times of high call volume or after-hours).

All calls are handled by dedicated RDNS staff and registered nurses who have experience in the health system and are fluent in medical terminology. Staff have received training from SA Health in the new software system and with regard to call answering protocols.

We are proud to have entered into this new agreement with NHCCN and look forward to contributing to the on-going evolution and improvement of managing patient-related incidents in the South Australian environment.

Talking diabetes... in Greek

Members of the Greek community living with diabetes have a new tool to help them better understand and manage their condition.

RDNS has released a 'talking book' to help educate Greek people about the condition in general and to assist them to deal with their own condition in a more informed way. Called 'Information on Diabetes in Greek', the talking book is a multiple-media tool that can be viewed on a computer.

Like any book, the presentation is split into different chapters, each dealing with a specific aspect of diabetes. In total, ten important diabetes topics are covered.

The book uses simple information sheets, short case studies and role-plays, and easy to understand terms that are not technical. Most importantly, all information is provided in Greek, with the option of English translations if people require it.

People have the choice of reading the information on screen, listening to it and hearing stories about how other members of the Greek community successfully manage their diabetes. The information sheets (in Greek and English) can also be printed out for easy use.

The talking book will be distributed by RDNS nurses to their Greek clients and their families, although the book is available for anyone to use if they require it via www.rdns.com.au

"Diabetes does not discriminate and is the fastest growing health problem in Australia. Nearly 1,500 people are diagnosed every week with type 2 diabetes," explains Jaklina Michael, Manager – Diversity at RDNS.

"At RDNS, we are committed to assisting all people to learn about their health and to better manage their health problems. 'Information on Diabetes in Greek'

is one way in which we can help people in the Greek community to do this," she says.

The 'Information on Diabetes in Greek' package was developed by RDNS in collaboration with the Australian Greek Welfare Society and Aspin Group. Its development also involved Greek community members who participated in audio recordings and photography; and community members from the Australian Greek Welfare Society who participated in the testing of the information.



By their deeds

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

This year, 124 RDNS nursing and support staff were recognised for achieving long service at RDNS across numerous year categories. In presenting staff with their awards for long and loyal service, Rosemary Hogan, Executive General Manager Service Delivery, remarked upon the qualities that are shared by all such staff at RDNS.

"We celebrate the fact that between you, an incredible 1,630 years have been devoted to RDNS and to the care of literally thousands of clients throughout the years.

"We celebrate the fact that, whatever your role, whatever your title or job description, each of you brings insight, skill and a depth of understanding that serves the people you care for and the people who work alongside you," she said.

"To clients, you bring knowledge and compassion; encouragement and patience; balance and support; inspiration and stability; consistency, reliability and trustworthiness. To your colleagues, you

are a model of excellence; a supportive and understanding voice; a source of wisdom, experience and insight; and a shining example of loyalty and dedication.

"You are indeed the modern authors of the inspiring and on-going story of RDNS and it gives me great pride to welcome you here this afternoon to celebrate your long-standing dedication to RDNS and the community," Ms Hogan told the large room of guests before they were treated to an address from Sue Pieters-Hawke, who was completing a full day of engagements at RDNS.