Introduction

The Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS) is one of the largest and most comprehensive aero-medical organisations in the world.\(^1\) It provides emergency and primary healthcare services for those living in rural, remote and regional areas. Reverend John Flynn was the founder of RFDS. In 1911, he relocated to the outback. Healthcare accessibility was poor and Flynn was inspired to improve the medical services for the people living there. He wanted to develop a route of communications that could solve the problem of remoteness.

The Service for South West Queensland (SWHHS)\(^2\) was developed by Dr Jim Baker in 1988 in conjunction with Queensland Health.\(^3\) South West Queensland is a large area the size of Germany, with Roma as its hub. People now can be treated locally without causing any disruption to the family and community.

Methods

Retrospective audit June 2013 – June 2014 of Flying Obstetrician and Gynaecology (FOG) services.

Results

1. Sixteen outreach stations are visited by FOG.
2. Full range of clinical services and procedures:
   - Gynaecology (hysterectomies, hysteroscopy, LLETZ, sling suspensions, sterilisations, other laparoscopies
   - Obstetrics (supervised or performed caesaeans), consultation services to GPs and midwives)
   - In 2013, there were 156 total births in Roma, with a 30% Caesarean section rate. The other hospitals in the SWHH service averaged of 30 deliveries per centre.

Conclusion

RFDS takes the finest care to Australia’s furthest corner. Local care of patients benefits the whole community. The visiting specialists also help in medical training and education, clinical governance development and quality assurance activities. It is an important service that provides vital health service to the people of Australia.

References

2. 7.30 report ABC, Queensland’s flying rural doctor is retiring, June 2001
3. Queensland Government, Roma midwifery team represents the South West at state forum, September 2014