

**RIDEWEST**  
Charity Cycle Brisbane To Longreach To Aid The Royal Flying Doctor Service

  
**Royal Flying Doctor Service**  
QUEENSLAND SECTION

# RIDEWEST *Impact Update*

## A message from Meredith Staib

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE (QUEENSLAND SECTION)

**The past year has been yet another display in Queensland resilience.**

There's no denying that this year has been challenging. Distribution shortages have often left our grocery store shelves bare, our annual inflation rate climbed to its highest in over 32 years and 11 interest rate hikes within a 12-month period has put individuals and families under considerable strain.

Amongst the financial pressures, the common daily challenges of life continue to impact Queenslanders across the state, which makes access to mental health and wellbeing services all the more critical. From clinical support with mental health disorders to simply having a friendly face to chat to, our team continues to help make a difference for people having a difficult time.

This year our passionate and dedicated RFDS Mental Health Clinicians provided care and support to over 12, 200 people and worked hard to adapt and transform our services to ensure that our mental health support remains accessible to everyone, no matter how rural or remote.

The Outback Mental Health Team partnered with local communities on key events and initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues and provide access to face-to-face RFDS mental health specialists and a range of resources. Mental health workshops were also delivered across the west, engaging communities to share their stories and promote the therapeutic benefits of getting thoughts down on paper.

As we continue to provide mental health support to regional, rural and remote Queenslanders, we remain committed to learning new and innovative ways to

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meet every individual's needs. The dedication of our team has been commendable, and the support of the community has been essential in ensuring that we can continue to connect and engage with those in need.

As we progress through another year, we remain committed to delivering tailored mental health education and care to Queenslanders.

I am incredibly proud of what we have been able to accomplish and grateful for the unwavering support of our community. Together we will continue to ensure that every person living and working in our great state can access this critical care.

Warmest regards,



**Meredith Staib**



# Meet the RFDS team

**The provision of mental health out west could not be delivered without the dedication and devotion of world-class clinicians. It's incredible to see that the \$565,000 in funds raised from the 2022 RideWest event could be utilised to employ Maddysen Chen in a fly-in-fly-out full time role based out of Charleville.**



For the past five months Maddy has spent 12 days living and working in outback Queensland, before enjoying eight days off in Hong Kong, where her husband works as a pilot for Cathay Pacific. Originally hailing from Cairns, Maddy has lived all over Queensland, from the far north Tablelands to the central coast in Rockhampton. Her early career started with a placement at headspace Cairns and during 7 years with QantasLink, she has worked within various regional communities such as Weipa and Horn Island.

Maddy firmly believes that it is okay to not be okay and having someone to talk to can relieve a huge load of stress, be that emotionally or physically. Knowing you have a team there to support you is vital to overcoming barriers of access to mental health across the state.



**“Seeing people take steps towards a happier and healthier state of mind is the most rewarding work in the world and their strength amazes me everyday,”**

“It is significantly easier for Queenslanders living in metropolitan areas to access mental health support compared to those in the outback. This is why I believe RFDS is vital to providing accessibility to mental health services for everyone near and far.”

“Some people may only require a listening ear, however, others may have more complex needs that take more time. Either way, seeing people take steps towards a happier and healthier state of mind is the most rewarding work in the world and their strength amazes me everyday,” Maddy said.

As a child, Maddy harboured an affinity for aviation. “My father was a manager for Qantas, but sadly, I lost him at the age of six. It was during this time that I learned the power of grief counselling and mental health services, which eventually led me to this career pathway.”

Maddy and the team of mental health and wellbeing professionals within RFDS (Queensland Section) visit more than 100 rural, regional and remote Queensland communities each year, providing more than 12,100 episodes of care.

Now, working for RFDS (Queensland Section), the combined love of flying and helping people is truly a match made in heaven. “Joining RFDS really felt like coming home, particularly with the link to headspace Cairns. I was blessed to have a psychologist help me get through such a challenging period of my life and it has shaped me into who I am today.” Working with RFDS, Maddy is now able to provide that same level of care and support to people of all ages across rural, regional and remote parts of Queensland.

**Maddysen Chen**  
Senior Mental Health Clinician  
- Outback Mental Health