

St John Ambulance Queensland merging with The IDEAS Van to deliver ophthalmic services to regional Queensland communities.

St John Ambulance Qld (St John) has this week announced the merger with The IDEAS Van, delivering ophthalmic services to regional, remote and rural communities. After seeing the need for eye care that was not previously available, The IDEAS Van was the first of its kind, 8 years ago, to bring crucial ophthalmic services to the Queensland community by way of a fully equipped prime mover and trailer.

St John Ambulance CEO, Stephen Porter, recently visited The IDEAS Van in Emerald and was impressed with the level of eye care provided. The Van delivered services to people who would otherwise be unable to access vital ophthalmic procedures. Mr Porter said "We are thrilled to have the opportunity to provide quality support and services to the regions and continue the strong connection with the historic ophthalmic roots of St John. This Van will continue to provide ophthalmic services in support of the isolated, vulnerable and marginalised".

The St John Ambulance team is honoured to be part of this new partnership. Chair, Rev Dr Peter Devenish-Mearns stated, "I am thrilled to officially welcome the wonderful team from the IDEAS Van to work with the St John family and we are committed to ensure the continued delivery of this essential service to combat avoidable blindness in remote and vulnerable Queensland communities."

Lyndall De Marco, IDEAS Van founding CEO, said, "For decades St John Ambulance, a charitable, non-profit, humanitarian organisation, has helped save countless lives and address isolation and disadvantage in our community. It is the perfect new home for the IDEAS Van to continue its celebrated work and extend its outreach program to regional areas."

Background

The IDEAS Van facility was founded in 2013 with a grant from Qld Health supplemented the original funding from the Diamond Jubilee Charitable trust. The 19 metre, 3 room, fully equipped ophthalmic treatment facility travels throughout Queensland and Victoria to facilitate the delivery of bulk billed treatment through visiting and local Ophthalmologists and Optometrists.

St John Ambulance has been active in Queensland for more than 130 years and internationally is part of a global organisation with a distinguished and honourable history over 900 years. One of the pillars of this international organisation is Ophthalmology, which started when St John established the worlds' first eye hospital in Jerusalem in 1882, that still operates today.

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Photos:

St John CEO, Stephen Porter, with The IDEAS Van driver



The IDEAS Van ophthalmologist treating patient, Gerald Mayne, 94 years.

