EAST ANGLIAN AIR AMBULANCE - BLOOD IS NOW AVAILABLE ON EVERY MISSION

News / Business aviation



East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) is now permanently able to deliver blood transfusions as a core part of its life-saving service.

Following an urgent fundraising appeal made by EAAA in May, the air ambulance charity, which covers Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire, is now able to carry packed red blood cells and freeze-dried plasma on every mission.

Blood transfusions ensure that the most gravely injured patients suffering a major bleed have the best chance of getting to hospital through increasing oxygen delivery and clot production.

EAAA's Blood on Board project has involved raising in excess of £90,000 and essential partnership working between two of the region's hospitals, Addenbrooke's and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH), and two volunteer-driven blood biker charities, SERV Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and Norfolk Blood Bikes.

Together, these organisations ensure EAAA has a daily supply of the red blood cells needed to help save lives, to each of its operational bases (one at Cambridge airport and one at Norwich airport), every day of the year. The hospitals are key in sourcing, checking and providing the red blood cells and the blood bike volunteers are essential in getting the blood cells from the

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respective hospitals to EAAA every evening, and returning any unused blood cells back to the hospital.



Delivering this life-saving treatment will require additional funding year-on-year to cover the annual costs incurred.

Richard Hindson, Head of Operations at EAAA said: “This entire project has been successful thanks to the generosity of the public and the fantastic partnership working between Addenbrooke’s, NNUH, SERV Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and Norfolk Blood bikes."

RICHARD HINDSON, Head of Operations, EAAA commented: “I’m hugely grateful and really proud to know that going forward we will have two vital blood products available on every mission for the patients where these treatments might be the difference between life and death. It is a privilege to work alongside other charities and hospitals whose main aim is to save lives and achieve the very best outcomes for our patients. ”

Carol Harvey, EPA Network Blood Transfusion Manager at NNUH, added: “I am really pleased that we are doing this and we are delighted that the team can play such a vital role in helping to save patient lives. There has been a lot of work and paper work that has gone into getting this off the ground, but it is all worthwhile to help save lives. I want to thank the teams at EAAA and NBB for their dedication to ensuring this project is able to take place.”

Sean Moore, Chairman of Norfolk Blood Bikes, said: “Norfolk Blood Bikes are proud to be resupplying the EAAA crew based at Norwich. The team at NBB have been very keen to restart the blood on board after the trial finished in December, and hope that our nightly resupply will assist in saving those patients who need it. Our moto is we’ll go no matter what, yes that even means that we will still resupply the EAAA in all weathers.”

Cindy Dickerson, Chair of SERV Suffolk and Cambridgeshire (The Bloodrunners) added: "Our volunteers will be supporting our EAAA colleagues by delivering blood products to them every day, enabling them to carry blood on board each time they attend a seriously injured or sick patient. We are absolutely thrilled to be part of this exciting initiative."

The red blood cells are now available on every East Anglian Air Ambulance helicopter or rapid

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response vehicle mission alongside lyoplas, freeze-dried plasma, to help treat people suffering life-threatening bleeds.



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