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Safe and Sound...in the Air and on the Ground

Recently, Charity staff and our army of dedicated volunteers have been getting information first hand from Air Crew Doctor Adam Chesters about how our HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) Doctors and Paramedics give specialised care to critically ill patients.

Having highly skilled Doctors as part of our Air Crew brings significant benefits to patients, particularly in terms of **drugs** that can be given, **equipment** that can be used, **procedures** that can be administered and **decisions** that can be made. However, these greatly enhanced benefits to our patients not only require increased complexity in the way that we work but also a more sophisticated requirement for the Trust to ensure that *everything* we do is done *safely*.

Clinical Governance (CG) is the term used to describe the many and various activities and processes that we manage and engage in, to ensure that everything is safe and sound, both in the air and on the ground.

A wonderful opportunity arose to educate our volunteers about the significance of Clinical Governance through short yet dynamic and interactive training sessions kindly hosted by professional trainer and **Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust Volunteer, Anni Ridsdill Smith**. Anni said, *"I was delighted to be asked to design and deliver training for the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust. I work as a specialist trainer in commercial aviation and I also volunteer my time to the Trust. I feel very privileged to live in a county where we have access to world-class helicopter emergency medicine, with specially trained doctor and paramedic teams working to save precious lives. The training was all about Clinical Governance and provided us with a fantastic opportunity to bring together medical Consultants, specialist Doctors, Paramedics, clinical/operational experts, staff and volunteers from Essex, Hertfordshire and London, both on video and in person, to review and discuss the ways in which Clinical Governance is managed and its role in the delivery of a safe, high quality Air Ambulance service."*

Following this training, our volunteers are now actively going out and spreading the word about Clinical Governance through meeting and talking to the public at fundraising events and giving presentations. At present, the general public perception of the Air Ambulance is that it is a vehicle which can quickly get to patients and swiftly fly them to the nearest hospital. However, **the Herts Air Ambulance isn't just a helicopter it is a vital Emergency Medical Service that brings the hospital to the patient.**

The speed with which our Air Crew can reach a patient, identify and administer processes to slow, halt or even reverse the effects of life-threatening injury, is crucial in helping to save the patient and return them to full health.

As **Phil Grieve, the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust Clinical Manager** says; *"The aim of the Air Ambulance service is to deliver high quality pre-hospital care then transfer patients safely and rapidly to a specialist hospital where a team of experts are immediately on hand to administer the next phase of medical care."*

Once a month, Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust (EHAAT) hold Clinical Governance Days where the Medical Director, Doctors, Paramedics and other key team members meet with specialist consultants from EMSC (Emergency Medicine Services Consultants), providers of Clinical Governance to review and audit their recent activities in depth, discuss clinical effectiveness and share ideas to continuously improve the service. In addition, the pre-hospital care consultants chair weekly case review meetings and fly with our HEMS Doctors regularly to supervise their practice to ensure continued professional development and quality assurance.

Gareth Davies, EMSC Director said, *"The consultants from EMSC have many years of experience and accumulated expertise in aeromedical care, HEMS operations, training HEMS Doctors and the governance of this type of medical service. We work in partnership with EHAAT to quality assure the medical aspects of the care that is provided, we all want what is right for those critically ill or injured patients we are called to treat. It has been extremely encouraging to provide training and information to the EHAAT volunteers so they are able to disseminate the work of EHAAT and all the elements that happen behind the scenes to make it a high quality service provider."*

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For more information please contact Hannah Ashby, PR & Marketing Coordinator on 01787 226118.

Photographs:

- 1) EMSC Director Gareth Davies presenting to EHAAT staff and volunteers
- 2) & 3) HEMS Paramedics Dave Tamarro and Ben Meyer, HEMS Consultant Gareth Grier and EHAAT Clinical Manager Phil Grieve perform a 'moulage' (a training exercise where a mock incident is carried out) to EHAAT staff and volunteers.

Notes to Editor:

The **Herts Air Ambulance** is a vital life-saving Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS). It costs around £130,000 each month to cover all charitable costs and aircraft operations including the provision of doctors. The service enables clinicians and life-saving support equipment to be rushed to the scene of an incident and the patient can be flown to an appropriate hospital. The Herts Air Ambulance receives no National Lottery funding and is reliant upon donations from the public and local businesses to raise funds in order to keep the Air Ambulance flying.

Anni Ridsdill Smith MSc FCIPD is the founder of *airate*. She has a Master of Science degree (with distinction) in Training and Performance Management from The University of Leicester (UK) and she has conducted research into the role of Emotional Labour in front-line passenger contact work at Heathrow Airport. She is a qualified CRM instructor and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in the UK. Anni spent much of her career with the Human Resources team at American Airlines and she has studied, lived and worked in the UK, USA, Hong Kong and Taiwan. She is passionate about helping employers equip their employees to cope calmly and professionally with passenger anger and has trained airline, airport and immigration employees from around the world.

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