

Frequently asked questions

1. What is East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA)?

- A helicopter emergency medical service (HEMS)
- We have one helicopter and two RRVs at each of our bases in Norwich and Cambridge.
- We take highly skilled medical crews to the scene of accidents and medical incidents. This includes one doctor and one critical care paramedic along with specialist equipment and medication.
- To continue providing our life-saving service 24/7 365 days a year service we need to raise over £17 million this year.

2. Why doesn't the government support you?

Air Ambulances are charitable organisations. However, support from the government came when Chancellor George Osborne awarded £5 million to 20 air ambulance organisations in March 2015 as part of the LIBOR Trust Fund (of which EAAA received £250,000). We also received a bigger sum later for the new helicopter at Norwich. The donations were given to reflect the government's recognition of the role that emergency services play in society.

In 2019, East Anglian Air Ambulance was also awarded almost £800,000 from the Department of Health and Social Care from the £10 million made available in the Autumn Budget for all UK air ambulance charities. This one-off grant was restricted income for future projects and was used to fund a variety of capital projects, including;

- The renovation of the charities Norwich Base, the purchase of two additional rapid response vehicles
- The purchase of night-vision goggles
- The installation of an immersive training Suite for crew at the Norwich base to better prepare our teams for challenging conditions on-scene
- The installation of a new aircraft hangar closer to the Cambridge base

3. Why don't you receive any National Lottery funding?

We are not entitled to apply for National Lottery funding as we do not own our helicopters, we lease them from Babcock Mission Critical Services Onshore Limited. As a result of this we decided to launch our own EAAA Lottery (separate from the National Lottery) in August 2001 to raise funds.

Over the past 15 years this has gone from strength to strength and brings in over 40% of the annual target and is a great way for those who take part to support us. Please encourage people to join our lottery –it is very easy online!

4. What is the difference between flying at night and in the day?

The main difference between flying in darkness and in daylight is that navigation is more complex; in darkness obstacles and hazards have to be assessed prior to take-off whereas in daylight the crew can actually view the scene clearly. Rules for night-time landing are also different. More landing space is required so the pilot will choose an open space while paying particular attention to overhead wires and livestock. We can airlift patients at night and we are working with hospitals throughout the area to have lit helipads.

5. Why do you fly with two pilots?

We fly with two pilots for many reasons, but it means the paramedic doesn't have to assist the pilot with flights to unsurveyed sights and can focus on the clinical side. The second pilot can also assist taking extra kit to scene while the other pilot stays with the helicopter. For us though the most important factor is it means extra safety and care for the whole team and patient.

6. What is EAAA aftercare?

The aftercare support service has been implemented to support patients and their families following an incident which EAAA attended. We can help patients understand what happened to them before they were admitted to hospital, put them in touch with the crew who treated them and direct to other organisations who may be of additional support to them. We are also here to support families who have lost loved ones, provide someone to talk to, and where appropriate, answer questions.

7. Do you have a helipad at Addenbrooke's yet?

We have a long-term temporary helipad which is situated on the new bypass road behind the Rosie building. This was built in 2012 using money raised from the Cambridge Chariots of Fire race in 2006. Due to building work around the helipad on Dame Mary Arch Way the hospital re-located the helipad to land at the corner of Dame Mary Archer Way and Francis Crick Avenue. This still requires a land ambulance transfer to A&E and we look forward to a permanent helipad being built close to the new A&E department which is planned for the future.

Previous to this, we used to fly into the Gog Magog golf course and had a ten-minute transfer by land ambulance to A&E. Now we are able to land on the hospital site, we are met by a land ambulance which transfers the patient to A&E. Until Addenbrooke's has undergone all its own development we are not sure where our permanent helipad will be located, but for now at least we can fly directly into hospital grounds.

With the introduction of the helipad at Addenbrooke's, we now have landing sites at all the major hospitals within the area, although some are not ideally located. As part of our five-year strategy we are working closely with other emergency service organisations within the area to influence and support hospitals in securing helipads which will be lit at night so we can still deliver patients in the hours of darkness.

People may ask about helipads at other hospitals in our area:

- King's Lynn- yes, trolley push, lit pad
- Norfolk and Norwich- yes, outside the A&E department, lit pad
- West Suffolk- yes, trolley push. This is being re-developed and will be lit in the coming year.
- Ipswich – Yes, next to the A&E department. This is a lit helipad
- James Paget- lit helipad
- Luton and Dunstable- yes, but requires a land ambulance transfer
- Peterborough- yes, trolley push

8. Who or what is Magpas?

[Magpas \(Mid Anglia GP Accident Service\)](#) is a separate charity to the East Anglian Air Ambulance; we work together closely (and with Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust) to ensure that extensive coverage is provided to the victims of accidents and medical emergencies in East Anglia.

People are sometimes confused about our two charities, but the most important thing to highlight is that we both strive to deliver the best care to our patients. We also share trainee doctors and medical practices.

9. What is the Children's Air Ambulance?

The Children's Air Ambulance is part of The Air Ambulance Service, an umbrella organisation that also includes two other regional air ambulance services: Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance (WNAA) and Derbyshire, Leicestershire & Rutland Air Ambulance (DLRAA).

The Air Ambulance Service introduced the Children's Air Ambulance in 2012 as a national transfer service for seriously ill children and babies. They state that they offer 'a clinically custom-designed flying intensive care unit for children'.

Both WNAA and DLRAA are similar to EAAA in the fact that they provide HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) within their local region. The Children's Air Ambulance however only focuses on paediatric transfers.

Things to highlight:

- They focus on inter hospital transfers for really sick children, for example if your child is in North Yorkshire and needs to be in Great Ormond St.
- They are operating purely as an air ambulance (e.g. transport from A to B, with medical assistance) whereas we provide HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service delivering A&E level care at the scene of an incident).
- EAAA can, and does, treat children and babies of any age who experiences a life threatening or life changing incident.
- We treat the patient (child) at the scene, bringing pre-hospital level care, and where appropriate we fly them to the most appropriate hospital for their needs. We can also carry a parent if necessary.
- All our monitors are equipped for dealing with babies, infants and children (eg blood pressure cuffs) and we have just received a fantastic donation which has enabled the purchase of specialist baby ventilators.
- The Children's Air Ambulance does not compete with us for service, but they do confuse donors and thus compete for funds. As a national service they are able to fundraise nationwide whereas local air ambulances usually only fundraise within their region.

10. Do you rescue people from water?

Our aircrafts are not equipped with a winch function, so we are unable to lift patients directly from scene to the aircraft. Therefore, we do not usually cover incidents occurring out at sea or over water. However, we do work with the Coastguard service if we need to treat a patient near water.

11. Charity shops

We do not operate any charity shops so we cannot accept any items. If you have larger items you would like to donate to us, [The Bullock Fair Charity Shop in Harleston, Norfolk](#) may be able to accept them. They then donate their takings to us and a number of other local charities. They have raised over £1 million for us since they began.

12. Charity clothing bags

World UK Trading Ltd have previously supported us with the collection of clothing bags. However, while they may still operate in your area, we no longer work with them so please make sure to double check the charity on the front of the bag. If it has our name on it, it is an old bag so please do not use.

13. Clothing banks

Working with Recycling Solutions, our new textile recycling partner, you can help reduce the amount being sent to landfill and raise money for EAAA by recycling your unwanted clothes at one of our new clothing banks.

[Clothing banks in your area and more information.](#)

Recycling Solutions are our only clothing recycling partner. We have previously worked with The Salvation Army but this partnership has come to an end and our joint-branding on these banks is in the process of being removed.