**Frequently asked questions**

1. **What is EAAA?**
* A helicopter emergency medical service
* We take highly skilled medical crews to the scene of accidents and medical incidents
* Our fundraising target for this year is just over £11 million:

£7.3m to run the operational lifesaving air ambulance

£1.2m support costs to provide the underpinning administration and governance

£2.6 m fundraising cost to generate the income required

1. **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.

Magpas started in the 1970’s with the aim of ensuring local doctors reached the scenes of traffic accidents quickly. Over the years this has evolved to provide advanced medical care in all emergency situations. Between 2007 and 2010 EAAA used Magpas volunteer doctors on board its helicopters until EAAA began to employ its own doctors. Magpas subsequently launched a fundraising appeal to contract their own helicopter which is based at RAF Wyton, near Huntingdon.

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.

1. **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 (eg 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.
* Our crew are highly skilled clinicians and can treat any person of any age. On the way to a job the medics discuss and assess the likely needs of the patient and in the case of children are able to prepare accordingly. We carry smaller versions of our normal adult equipment range on board both our helicopter and rapid response vehicles.
* 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.
1. **Do you have a helipad at Addenbrooke’s yet?**

We have a long-term temporary helipad pad 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.

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 and 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
* Ipswich- yes, in a sports field, a buggy transfer to A&E
* James Paget- lit helipad
* Luton and Dunstable- yes, land ambulance transfer
* Peterborough- yes, trolley push
1. **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.

1. **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 around 50% of the annual target and is a great way for those who take part to support us. Please encourage people to join out lottery –it is very easy online!

1. **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.

1. **Charity clothing bags**

Until recently we worked with a company called World UK Trading who organised the collection of clothing through charity bags on our behalf. This has not been as successful as we would have liked, and we have made the decision to instead work in partnership with Salvation Army to collect clothing. This new collaboration will be implemented throughout the region shortly. Other charities still use World UK Trading, or similar companies, so you may still get questions in regards to charity bags. Please reiterate that the bags are nothing to do with EAAA and any questions/concerns should be directed to the company or charity themselves.

For example, it common to be specifically asked about Children’s Air Ambulance clothing bags and whether they are a scam. Please see question 3 for details about who they are and point out that they are a separate organisation to us. If people have any concerns, and it is a Children’s Air Ambulance bag, then they should contact the Children’s Air Ambulance directly on 08454 130999.

1. **Charity shops**

We do not have any charity shops and therefore we cannot accept any clothing or other physical donations, apart from through those arranged with our roadside collectors. We do not have any plans to develop a retail arm of the charity.

1. **Do you rescue people from water?**

Our aircraft’s 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 coast guard service.