

# CareFlight 30 years of saving lives, speeding recovery and serving the community



**1986** **May:** CareFlight is incorporated as a public company.

**June:** CareFlight commissions its first helicopter, a Squirrel AS350B (VH-HCF).

**July:** Andrew Withers, 14, and his sister Heidi, 11, become CareFlight's first helicopter patients, following a car crash. They are flown from Lithgow to Westmead Hospital and both make a full recovery.

**1987**

**1988** **May:** CareFlight becomes the first emergency helicopter service in NSW to go on 24-hour duty.

**1989** **March:** Multi-mode retrieval - helicopter, fixed wing and road ambulance - commences.

**1990** **August:** The CareFlight Stretcher Bridge, the world's first fully integrated mobile intensive care module, enters service.

**1991** **January:** CareFlight implements its medical registrar training scheme after becoming the first Australasian non-hospital organisation to be granted accreditation for specialist training in critical care.

**1992** **October:** CareFlight co-founder Ian Badham receives the International Association of Air Medical Services Marriott-Carlson Award.

**1993** **April:** Friday night football is interrupted for 31 minutes as the CareFlight helicopter lands on Brookvale Oval to airlift two Parramatta Rugby League players with suspected spinal injuries, to hospital.

**1994** **January:** CareFlight provides medical and communications support following the Newcastle earthquake.

**1995** **February:** The Westmead operations base is opened by Health Minister Peter Collins.

**1996** **June:** CareFlight is called to the Sydney Olympic Stadium during construction to retrieve an injured worker.

**1997** **September:** CareFlight is called to Bowral Hospital to retrieve 16-year-old Eliza Stankovic who is suffering from meningococcal disease. Dr Alan Garner spends 1 1/2 hours fighting to keep ahead of the spreading infection and stabilise her for transport. Eliza has both legs amputated below the knee, as well as some of her fingers, but goes on to become a paralympian. She is one of 18 meningococcal patients transported by CareFlight during the year.

**1998** **August:** 13-year-old Tenelle Bolte is rescued from the flooded Nepean River seconds before she is swept over a weir. The CareFlight crew of pilot Keith Stewart, aircrewman Graeme Fromberg, paramedic Ian Spencer and Dr Tim Skinner are later recognised for their bravery with a number of prestigious international awards.

**1999** **December:** CareFlight rescues seven sailors from the stricken yacht Business Post Nalad during wild storms in the Sydney-Hobart yacht race. The crew of pilot Dan Tyler, aircrewman Graeme Fromberg and paramedic Murray Traynor later receive the Prince Philip Award and other wide recognition for their rescue efforts.

**2000** **August:** CareFlight's Central West dedicated regional emergency helicopter service is launched by Health Minister Craig Knowles at Orange and Premier Bob Carr at Wellington.

**2001** **May:** CareFlight's Central West helicopter Agusta A119 'Koala' is launched at Darling Harbour.

**2002** **May:** CareFlight treats five-year-old burns victim Sophie Delezo after she is hit by a car at a pedestrian crossing, giving her a blood transfusion and placing her on life support before flying her to Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick.

**2003** **September:** In its first mission, Central West CareFlight flies a patient from Condobolin.

**2004** **July:** CareFlight celebrates 20 years of saving lives.

**2005** **February:** CareFlight International flies East Timor's President Ramos-Horta from Dili to Darwin under full intensive care, following a shooting assassination attempt.

**2006** **July:** Northern Beaches toddler Charlie Steven falls onto his head from a bunk and goes into cardiac arrest. His mother and ambulance officers give CPR, CareFlight puts him into an induced coma and flies him to hospital under full intensive care. He miraculously makes a complete recovery.

**2007** **June:** Four King Air turboprop planes are leased in readiness for provision of fixed wing aeromedical services to the NT Government, under an interim contract.

**2008** **February:** CareFlight assumes responsibility for the provision of doctors to and clinical coordination of the Top End Medical Retrieval Service.

**2009** **May:** CareFlight achieves the highest level certification for Quality in Health Management Systems, ISO 9001+ Core Health Standards.

**2010** **January:** CareFlight commences provision of helicopter services specialising in the transfer of sick babies and children.

**2011** **May:** CareFlight achieves the highest level certification for Quality in Health Management Systems, ISO 9001+ Core Health Standards.

**2012** **January:** CareFlight commences night time HIRT operations using NVG.

**2013** **April:** CareFlight Board approves PHANTOM (Pre-Hospital Assessment of Noninvasive Tissue Oximetry Monitoring) research project.

**2014** **June:** Territory Insurance Office (TIO) signs a three year sponsorship agreement with CareFlight, committing a minimum \$250,000 per annum to CareFlight's NT operations.

**2015** **August:** CareFlight NT moves into the new state of the art Darwin hangar, the largest dedicated aeromedical facility in Australia.

**2016** **May:** CareFlight celebrates 30 years of saving lives, speeding recovery and serving the community. We now conduct around 5,000 missions a year.

**1991** **July:** CareFlight's 2,000th patient, six-month-old Nathan Isdale, is flown to Camperdown Children's Hospital after being admitted to Bowral Hospital with viral pneumonia.

**1992** **October:** CareFlight responds to a bus crash at Linden which leaves one person dead and 38 injured. Medical teams triage and administer treatment at the scene, while the critical are airlifted to Nepean Hospital.

**1993** **January:** The new Bell helicopter undertakes its first mission to a hang glider crash in the Blue Mountains.

**1994** **January:** CareFlight conducts its first three-patient mission on the Bell helicopter, following a car crash near Tamworth.

**1995** **April:** In an Australian first, the CareFlight medical team uses an intra-aortic balloon pump during a helicopter patient transfer.

**1996** **July:** CareFlight retrieves its 5,000th patient.

**1997** **September:** CareFlight is called to Bowral Hospital to retrieve 16-year-old Eliza Stankovic who is suffering from meningococcal disease. Dr Alan Garner spends 1 1/2 hours fighting to keep ahead of the spreading infection and stabilise her for transport. Eliza has both legs amputated below the knee, as well as some of her fingers, but goes on to become a paralympian. She is one of 18 meningococcal patients transported by CareFlight during the year.

**1998** **January:** CareFlight's 7,000th patient, Victoria Friend, is rescued from a crashed aircraft near Merriwa.

**1999** **February:** CareFlight receives the 1998 Award for Aviation Safety Excellence in the AOC category.

**2000** **October:** CareFlight doctors retrieve burns patients from Denpasar following the terrorist bombings in Bali.

**2001** **March:** HIRT is launched by Premier Bob Carr at Darling Harbour.

**2002** **May:** HIRT's first patient is accessed at Kurrajong.

**2003** **September:** CareFlight medical teams attend the Waterfall train crash in which seven people are killed, triaging, treating and transporting the injured.

**2004** **March:** CareFlight International launches the first dedicated medjet to be based in Darwin, with NT Chief Minister the Hon Clare Martin officiating.

**2005** **November:** HIRT operations are extended to the Central Coast.

**2006** **December:** The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) grants approval to CareFlight to fly night operations using night vision goggle technology.

**2007** **January:** Our helicopter service expands as we start providing aeromedical support to the Northern Territory Government.

**2008** **January:** CareFlight conducts its inaugural NVG medical mission when flying a critically ill infant from Katherine to Darwin Hospital.

**2009** **March:** CareFlight launches MediSim, a mobile simulation based trauma training program designed to support clinicians working in rural and remote communities.

**2010** **July:** CareFlight celebrates 25 years of saving lives, flying from eight bases to destinations around Australia and beyond.

**2011** **November:** Official launch of CareFlight MediSim, by Mayor of Orange City Council, Councillor John Davis.

**2012** **October:** CareFlight International Air Ambulance (CIAA) is awarded the prestigious European Aeromedical Institute (EURAMI) Accreditation, Australia's only provider to hold this.

**2013** **March:** The last patient is recruited into the Head Injury Retrieval Trial which transitions from trial to service.

**2014** **June:** NT Health Minister the Hon John Efferink formally opens the Northern Operations building.

**2015** **March:** CareFlight secures a six year contract to provide aeromedical support to INPEX for their Ichthys oil & gas operations off the coast of WA.

**2016** **February:** CareFlight marks 10 years of rapid response service with Past Patients Day.

**2017** **July:** CareFlight is the beneficiary of our largest ever bequest, more than \$2 million, from the estate of the late Margaret Alice Porter.

**2018** **November:** In a complex, time-critical mission involving two helicopters, a King Air aircraft and two Darwin based medical teams, CareFlight rescues the pilot of a mustering helicopter that crashed on a remote station in the NT.

**2019** **December:** Christmas Eve sees CareFlight's first international mission on the CareFlight owned and operated medjet. This brings our jet operations completely in-house, achieving the goal of providing a fully integrated aeromedical service.