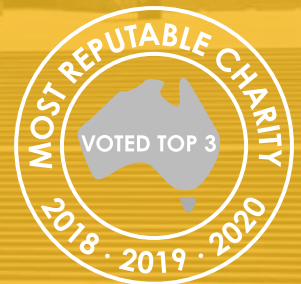




# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

# CareFlight



CareFlight recognises and respects Indigenous Australians as the Traditional Owners of these lands. In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge and pay respects to the Traditional Owners and Elders – both past and present – of all the lands on which CareFlight operates.



Crew prepare the G150 for its first mission.



### **OUR VISION**

To be the most advanced integrated aeromedical service trusted by all Australians.

### **OUR MISSION**

To save lives, speed recovery and serve the community.

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# Chairperson and CEO report

## Our Mission and Ethos

CareFlight's Mission is "to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community." Our focus is on our patients first and foremost, and this flows through into everything we do as an organisation. Our operations occur in some of the most challenging remote and regional areas, as well as in heavily built-up cities. This means we have to continuously assess what aircraft and equipment are most appropriate to enable us to complete our missions in the safest way possible. This process of continual improvement and innovation has defined CareFlight from its earliest days.

CareFlight continues to invest in the development of our clinicians through our registrar programs and our continuing internal training. This investment in developing pre-hospital critical care clinicians remains a central part of how CareFlight continues to strengthen the resilience of communities across Australia.

The CareFlight ethos of quality and care to every patient and community we touch, remains central to our operations every single day.

## Strength in Adversity

This year has again been heavily disrupted by the ongoing impact of COVID-19. Our ability to deliver our operations, has at times, been limited by state border closures and the challenges of being unable to conduct jet



*Chairperson, Dr Andrew Refshaug (L) and Chief Executive Officer, Mick Frewen (R).*

missions offshore. We have also been limited in our ability to send our flight operations and engineering staff overseas for ongoing training, but we have worked very closely with CASA to ensure our operations remain compliant and safe. As with the previous year, CareFlight has been able to demonstrate time and again that our people are our true strength, showing determination and resilience to continue delivering our mission to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community, no matter the challenge faced.

Our ongoing investment in the depth of key roles has ensured we have been able to respond to each challenge that has arisen. Even when key staff have been unable to cross borders, our depth in each base location has enabled us to meet all operational requirements. This reinforces that our investment in basing staff in key locations such as the Northern Territory has been the right strategy. We have continued to maintain

control measures at our bases to protect our operational crews, ensuring we can continue to safely respond to the at-risk communities we support.

## Strategic Focus

The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually and guides our effort to ensure we continue to deliver our social purpose. This plan reflects our charitable charter and status as a for-purpose enterprise. It provides us with a benchmark against which to measure our progress year-on-year.

## Growth and Sustainability

CareFlight's growth in recent years has been critical to ensuring we are a resilient organisation. It has ensured we have been well positioned to respond to the crisis events that have impacted Australia during the last 24 months, with sufficient capacity to meet emerging requirements while still ensuring we can deliver our essential services. We have been able to introduce into service our Gulfstream G150 jet, dedicated to supporting the NT. This new aircraft gives us the range and load capability to reach every state capital from Darwin. We have also purchased and modified the Airbus H145 helicopter to become our new Rapid Response Helicopter in Sydney. This gives us the capability to deploy our existing BK117 helicopter to support other tasking such as United States Marine Corps

(USMC) support, helping us increase revenue. Growth, as part of the strategy, is to both offset the risk of losing key contracts (as seen in the downturn in the oil and gas sector during this period) and also ensures we can continue to meet the increasing costs of compliance and governance.

We do not seek to grow in an aggressive way. We have a very deliberate approach to assessing what aligns with our social purpose and our core strengths, so that any growth provides a benefit across the organisation in terms of our sustainability and depth.

### **Diversification**

CareFlight continues to focus on increasing diversification across our revenue streams and in our fundraising channels. This diversification program, run over many years, has ensured CareFlight is resilient to impacts in any one area of our contractual revenue or our fundraising channels. We have seen

how unforeseen events such as the extent of the bushfires and the sudden emergence of COVID-19 can significantly disrupt forecast performance. Despite the many challenges we faced this year, our deliberate approach to diversification has ensured any impacts have been minimised and we will continue to look for opportunities in what will prove to be a challenging year ahead.

### **Controlling Costs**

CareFlight's long-term sustainability has been a major focus this year. We have reviewed every part of the organisation and have refined our structures and removed costs that are not critical to the delivery of our mission. This reset of operational costs will ensure we are able to better use every dollar for the benefit of the communities we serve.



*All our staff trained extensively in the correct use of PPE.*

### **Board of Directors**

Dr Andrew Refshauge  
*MBBS, FAICD*  
*Chairperson, Independent Non-Executive Director*

Mick Frewen  
*BA, MMgt, GAICD*  
*CEO, Executive Director*

Patricia Angus  
*PSM, MTH*  
*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Sue Bailey  
*GradDipMktg MAICD*  
*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Garry Dinnie  
*BComm, FCA FAICD, FAIM*  
*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Professor Leonard Notaras  
*AM, FACHSM, LLB, BA (Hons), BMed, DSc, DipCom, MA, MHA*  
*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Dr Robert Turner  
*MBBS (Hons), FANZCA (ANZCA), Dip DHM (SPUMS), Cert DHM (ANZCA), Dip Advanced DHM (ANZCA)*  
*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Ian Vanderbeek  
*BBus, GAICD*  
*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Peter Quayle  
*BCom, FCPA*  
*Company Secretary*





## **Safety and Quality**

CareFlight is a safety and quality led organisation in the way we approach every aspect of our service delivery. This is driven, not only by our duty of care to our employees and patients, but is also a critical element to ensuring we meet and exceed the requirements of our regulatory licence to conduct air ambulance work.

During the year, we have grown the number of patients we have supported by over 10% to over 8,800 patients. We have maintained the number of aircraft in operation, and have flown almost 10,000 (9,679.3) hours in our turbo prop and helicopter fleets, and more than 1,000 (1092) air hours in our jets.

## **Brand and Reputation**

We have continued to work hard on ensuring our work is well understood and supported in the community. We have been in the top three most trusted charities for several years running now, showing the work done by our team is well respected by the communities we support.

The ongoing support for our fundraising programs has remained strong throughout the challenges of the last two years, and has been critical to helping CareFlight remain resourced to deliver our mission.

## **Financial Strength**

CareFlight has been able to respond to this year's financial challenges due to the work done in recent years to build financial strength and through diversification of revenue. We have been impacted by the loss of revenue

from oil and gas contracts but have been able to offset this through the JobKeeper support provided by the Federal Government. This support has meant we have been able to retain our staff and ensures we are well positioned for the year ahead.

We have continued to invest in new systems and new capabilities and it is pleasing to report that despite the challenges and the significant investment we have made, CareFlight has been able to achieve a modest surplus of \$1,358,370 following on from the surplus in 2019/2020 of \$2,453,163.

Whilst the year ahead presents ongoing challenges, the work done to find new revenue and through cost containment initiatives ensures CareFlight remains well positioned for long-term financial stability.

This surplus will be reinvested back into enabling the business to deliver our social purpose including supporting the upgrading of our fleet, growing our cash reserves, and ensuring we continue to innovate and lead the industry in aeromedical response.

## **Board**

Anna Guillan retired from the Board at the 2020 Annual General Meeting. Anna was appointed a director in 2010 and in that time made a significant contribution to CareFlight's achievements through her sound judgement and insights as a director and as a member of the Audit & Risk Committee.

In April this year, Dr Nick Coatsworth also stepped down from the Board. Nick was appointed a director in 2015 and brought

a welcome and rare mix of youth, business acumen and medical experience to the Board and as a member of the Investment Committee. He was initially appointed as a Northern Territory resident director and subsequently relocated to Canberra where he recently, and somewhat reluctantly, in these COVID-19 times, developed a media profile as Deputy Chief Medical Officer of the Commonwealth Department of Health. The frequent and unscheduled demands of this new role have influenced Nick's decision to step down from the CareFlight Board.

We sincerely thank Anna and Nick for their years of dedicated service as directors and for their contribution to CareFlight's development.

Susan Bailey was appointed to the Board in September 2020. Sue has over 30 years' experience in telecommunications, having worked for Telstra, Virgin Mobile in Australia and the USA, and most recently Optus where she was a member of the executive leadership team. Sue has a wealth of experience in marketing, large-scale business transformation and complex project management. She is also a Director of Chorus Limited, an ASX and NZX-listed New Zealand telecommunications infrastructure company. We welcome Sue to the CareFlight family.

### **Board Recognition of Staff**

The Board would like to formally thank the staff for the outstanding work done during a very challenging year. Despite the significant disruptions to normal operations due to COVID, the staff at all times continued to deliver to the highest standards ensuring we

continued to provide the very best patient care at all times. This was delivered despite the personal disruptions many staff faced and shows the truly exceptional team we have working for CareFlight.

### **Our Commitment**

The Board and Management of CareFlight are committed to all our stakeholders, to deliver the assurance of good governance, dedication to service, excellence and a commitment to providing value-for-money in the delivery of our services. To our donors, we add a return on investment that goes not to their pockets, but to their hearts.

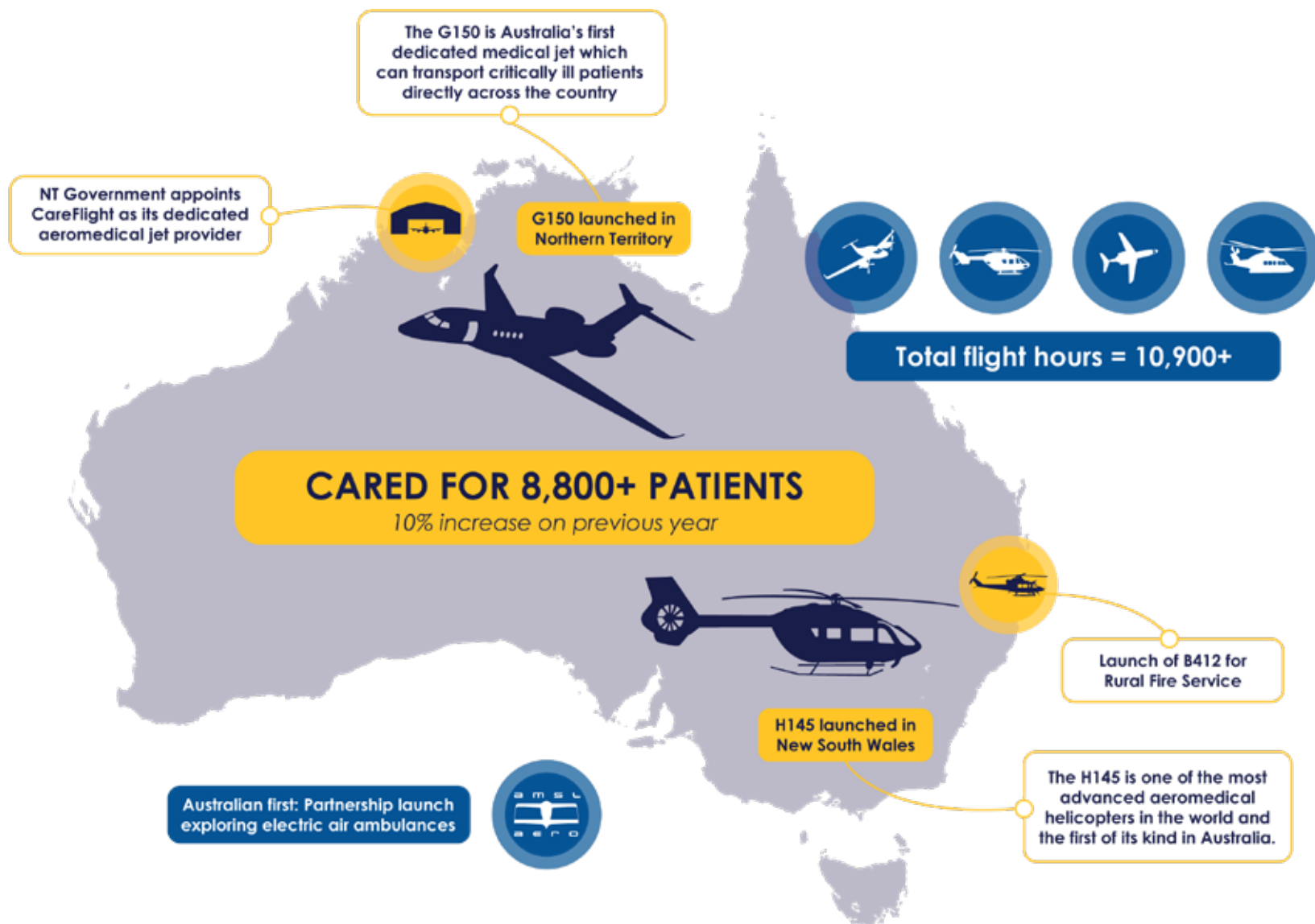
We thank all the members of the extraordinarily diverse and talented people – the CareFlight staff – who go out there every day and make it happen. It is central to who we are that the interdependence of the entire team means all our staff members contribute to getting our frontline teams to the patient. They all directly help to save lives and speed recovery, while living in and serving the communities we support. Many of our staff have seen job losses with partners and families during COVID-19, and to have been able to give stability to our staff at this time directly reflects on the core values we hold dear at CareFlight.

Finally, we acknowledge, with gratitude, all the members of the community – our donors, supporters and volunteers – who are there for us, and trust that we will be there for them.



*The Top End Rescue Helicopter flew to 139 patients last year.*

# The year in highlights





### COVID-safe videos in nine Indigenous languages

We created COVID-19 community safety videos in nine Indigenous languages: Warlpiri, Murrinh Patha, Kriol, Anindilyakwa, Kunwinjku, Tiwi, Maung, Burrara and Yolngu Matha.

### Territory Rescue Challenge

The innovative Territory Rescue Challenge brought in over \$53,000 for CareFlight.

### Safety and Quality

Safety is in our DNA. Last year, we undertook 132 internal safety audits.

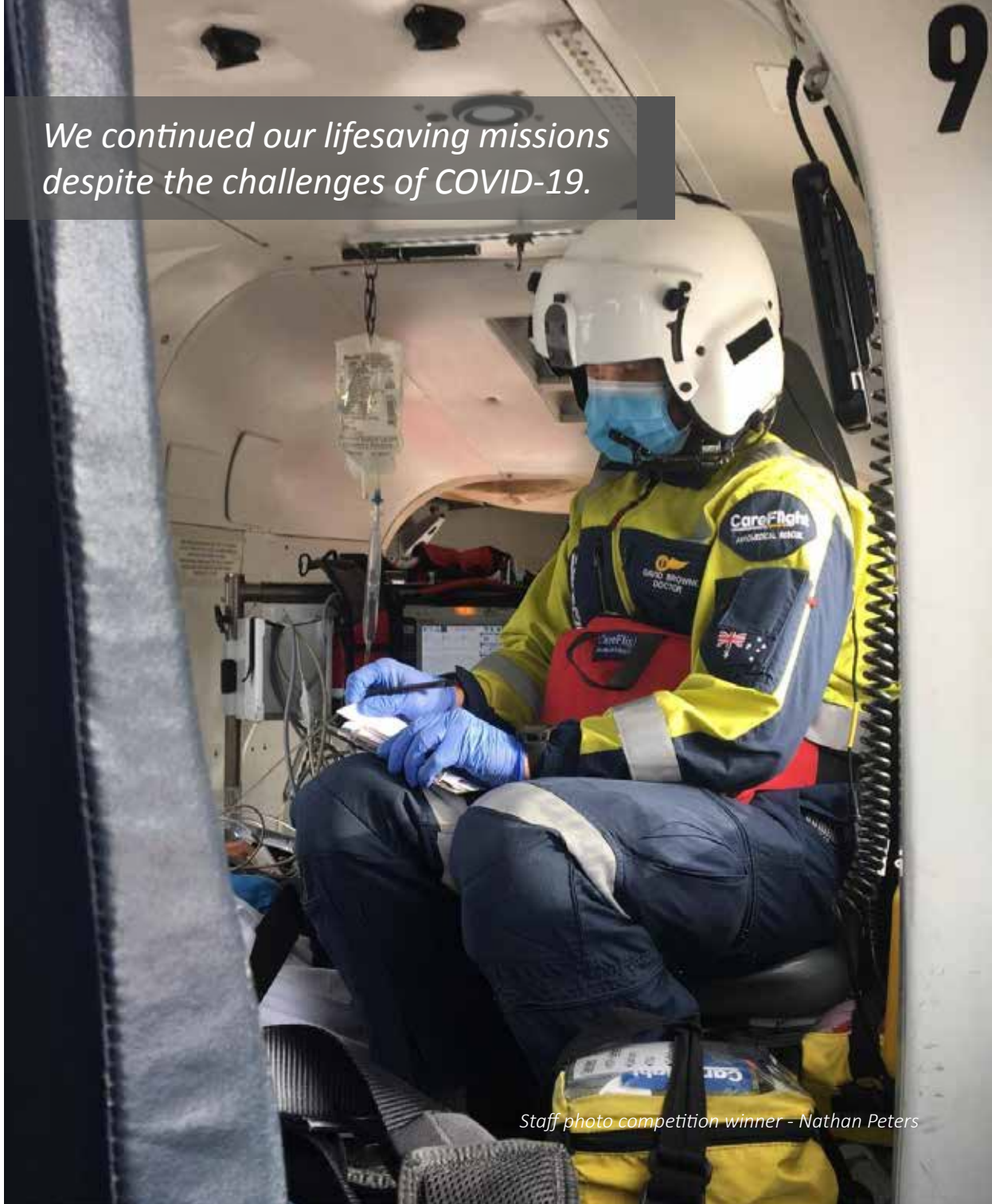
### Remote Trauma Course

Our NT Remote Trauma Course was designed to deliver lifesaving skills in an inclusive way for all participants.

### Clinical Governance

As part of our commitment to a strong system of Clinical Governance, we appointed a Head of Clinical Governance to support our national operations.

*We continued our lifesaving missions despite the challenges of COVID-19.*



Staff photo competition winner - Nathan Peters

# Delivering our services - Eastern

Despite the many challenges we encountered over the past year, we have managed to maintain full service delivery of our clinical emergency helicopter services as well as launch two new aircraft to the fleet: the H145 for Rapid Response and a B412 for the Rural Fire Services Agreement. We have been able to operate our international air ambulance service, albeit limited due to border closures. Our Patient Transport Services and HelpPoint team continue to provide excellent service and we have maintained all our contractual obligations under the Medical Services Agreement.

## CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter Service

Annual funding from NSW Health greatly assisted in providing our CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter Service (CRRH) to the Greater Sydney region. Over the last financial year, the service treated and transported 248 patients meaning that our specialised clinical teams provided severely injured patients with hospital-level care as quickly as possible.

In February, we launched our new Rapid Response Helicopter, the Airbus H145, which is the first aeromedical helicopter of its kind in Australia and is internationally recognised as one of the safest and most advanced aeromedical helicopters in the world. We will see this aircraft transition into service over the first half of the new financial year.

During the year, we continued to train Registrars and NSW Ambulance Critical Care Paramedics in CRRH operations. These vital crew members worked with our team of Critical Care Consultants and will remain within our operation between 6-18 months. This training ensures our clinical crew provide the best possible care using the most advanced equipment available. Our training also establishes a solid foundation for them to further their respective careers as our operation is often used as a springboard to continue working in the high acuity pre-hospital care environment.

## New South Wales Rural Fire Service

Fortunately, this fire season was not as intense as the previous year and the team continued to meet the requirements of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) agreement with enthusiasm and determination.

Aircraft serviced and flown by CareFlight staff



Our crew attend an incident in Wilton NSW where a motorcyclist sustained serious injuries.



It's always busy in our engineering hangar, Bankstown NSW.



were used to insert Remote Area Fire Teams and Remote Area Rescue Teams, as well as for fire observation and assisting with flood support.

We have now taken delivery of a B412 helicopter which replaces the AS350. Owned by the RFS, the new helicopter will be flown and maintained by CareFlight staff.

Staff on the Fire and Flood Response (FFR) Operations team consists of pilot, aircrew officers, engineers, and support services from engineering stores, operations and HelpPoint logistics coordinators. This year, we recruited two additional aircrew officers and one additional pilot instructor to enhance the operation.

We maintain a close working relationship with NSW RFS as they further develop this service and we will continue to provide the aircraft for NSW RFS crew training in preparation for the next season.

### Medical Services Agreement

CareFlight's agreement with NSW Ambulance sees CareFlight provide doctors on NSW Ambulance helicopters, road retrieval ambulances and fixed wing air ambulances.

Based in Bankstown, Wollongong, Orange and Canberra, eight large AW139 helicopters are used to conduct a wide range of missions including inter-hospital transfers, calls to the scene of major trauma usually outside Sydney, and search and rescue operations both inland and offshore.

CareFlight doctors are also assigned to care for patients on longer range fixed wing transfers and on road ambulances to major trauma scenes.

Our excellent working relationship with NSW Ambulance means that NSW patients receive the best, and most timely, pre-hospital medical care.

### CareFlight Air Ambulance Service

Our international and interstate jet air ambulance retrieval service was significantly impacted by COVID-19 border restrictions. Despite the restrictions, the team have continued to work hard, negotiating with Federal and State governments to approve transfers when deemed safe.



Winch training with NSW Rural Fire Service.



## Patient Transport Service

Our Patient Transport Service (PTS) in northern New South Wales continued to be busy transporting patients from regional and rural areas to tertiary hospitals for specialist treatment. During the year, we transported 1,142 patients to hospitals in Sydney and regional NSW.

The PTS agreement remains in good standing with HealthShare. The team are determined to find more efficiencies within the operation to increase the number of families CareFlight can assist. Some of these efficiencies include hiring our Patient Transport Vehicles, road nurses and drivers out to neighbouring service participants and building a strong rapport with the tasking hub at HealthShare.

So far, the changes and drive of our excellent staff are helping to make our short-term and long-term goals a reality.



## CareFlight Stories

### CareFlight's first helicopter pilot shares his story.

John Hoad is one of CareFlight's co-founders and first helicopter pilot. At the age of 26, John took a leap of faith, left his job as a senior radiographer at one of Sydney's major teaching hospitals, and embarked on a journey which has seen him become CareFlight's longest serving helicopter pilot. John writes about his 35-year journey with CareFlight.

I co-founded CareFlight with a team who believed that we could provide an integrated service comprised of people across disciplines. Having worked in hospitals, it was obvious to me that by integrating aviation and medicine, we could achieve something much greater than what was on offer at the time.

It was an extraordinary effort which probably wouldn't be possible today. We identified the key elements needed to get the service up and running and allocated the best people to make it happen. The team's commitment to establishing CareFlight was phenomenal: we went from nothing to being operational in four months.

When establishing CareFlight, we were determined that safety would be an integral part of our organisational culture. So, as an aviator what I'm most proud of is that we've maintained a very strong safety culture over the 35 years we've been in operation. It's not an easy thing to carry through an organisation as it grows so I'm extremely satisfied to see that we continue to recognise its importance.

At a personal level, I'm proud of the service CareFlight has provided to the community. When we save a life or improve patient outcomes, patients write or visit us and we get to see first-hand the difference that we've made in their lives and to their families.

Since starting with CareFlight I've flown six different helicopters. The first was a Squirrel AS350B, a single-engine helicopter which we could only fly under visual flight rules (VFR). This meant that we could only fly in certain conditions so if the weather was bad, we couldn't carry out missions. It was frustrating but it was the best helicopter we could afford at the time. In 1988, we upgraded to the Dauphin SA 365C2, a twin engine helicopter capable of flying under instrument flight rules (IFR). This meant we had a greater capability of flying in weather conditions which previously would have kept us grounded. Our lifesaving capabilities increased significantly with the Dauphin.

The most recent, and definitely the most exciting addition to CareFlight's fleet is the Airbus H145. The advanced cockpit, autopilot and avionics are state-of-the-art and make this helicopter one of the most advanced aeromedical helicopters operating in Australia.

In 1986, I took a leap of faith to be part of the team to start CareFlight and it was definitely worth it. Here I am 35 years later, still flying for CareFlight and still loving the organisation I co-founded.

*John Hoad  
Rotary Wing Pilot*

“What I'm most proud of is we've maintained a very strong safety culture over the 35 years we've been in operation.”



Rotary Wing Pilot, John Hoad.

# Delivering our services - Top End

## Top End Medical Retrieval Service

The Top End Medical Retrieval Service (TEMRS), supports a population of more than 50,000 people, 40 remote health clinics and three hospitals across the Northern Territory. Each mission is crewed with a CareFlight pilot, CareFlight nurse and often a CareFlight doctor, working together as a fully integrated aeromedical team bringing the hospital to the patient and providing a 24-hour delivery of equity in healthcare to remote communities.

We have experienced a very high operational tempo in the second half of 2020 as communities re-opened after movement was limited due to the implementation of the Bio-security Act in the early part of the year due to COVID-19.

During the year, we continued to deliver this service, completing over 3,800 missions, providing both high and low-acuity retrievals and repatriations.

## Palmerston Inter-hospital Road Transport Service

The Palmerston Inter-hospital Road Transport Service transports patients between Royal Darwin Hospital and Palmerston Regional Hospital. This year, we transferred over 3,400 patients, an average of over 280 per month.



CareFlight now provides a dedicated aeromedical jet evacuation service for the NT Government.

## Dedicated interstate aeromedical evacuation services contract and the launch of our new jet

Last year, The Northern Territory Government appointed CareFlight as its dedicated aeromedical jet evacuation service provider for five years.

As part of that contract we have added a Gulfstream G150 jet to our existing fleet. The G150 represents a new generation of aeromedical retrieval for Australia and our regional neighbours.

Selected to deliver CareFlight's inter-hospital aeromedical jet evacuation service, the G150 is Australia's first dedicated medical jet with the capability to transport critically ill patients

directly across the continent and from South East Asia.

The cutting-edge medical jet's higher speed and customised interior represent a significant advancement for patient care. With a flight speed of more than 1,000 kilometres per hour and a range of more than 5,300 kilometres, the G150 can fly significantly longer distances at a much faster speed compared to any other option available in Australia today.

The G150 has a custom-designed aeromedical interior with multiple cabin configuration options allowing for a diverse range of missions including multiple patients, critical non-stop rapid neonatal services and aeromedical evacuation services.



## Developing Darwin as an aeromedical hub

The expansion of our fleet, which includes the new G150, is part of our investment to continue Darwin's development as an aeromedical hub supporting industry, government and the region. Darwin has a critical mass of aeromedical and aviation activity and capacity. It is the base for the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre, while CareFlight's Top End operations employ 220 professionals utilising nine aircraft. The aeromedical hub will see an expansion of services in northern Australia and into South-East Asia and, importantly, continue to improve patient care and generate more local skilled jobs in the Territory.

### Australian Maritime Safety Authority

During the year, CareFlight was tasked to 21 missions by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). AMSA is responsible for responding to any emergency beacon activation in Australia's region of international rescue responsibility. Our night-vision capability and winch-equipped helicopters

allow us to locate and rescue people at night and from difficult-to-access places.

Over the past 12 months, our AMSA missions involved fishing and working vessels as well as recreational vessels.

### Supporting Defence activities

The needs of the Defence Force are well met by CareFlight's integrated model of providing a hospital emergency department level of care in the field and during transport. This match between Defence Force needs and our capabilities means we continue to deliver aeromedical evacuation services to the United States Marine Corps for their live fire exercises.

### Taking our remote trauma training into the community

As part of our national community education program, CareFlight has developed a Remote Trauma Course (RTC) designed to deliver lifesaving skills in an inclusive way for all participants. The course can be tailored to specific industries or work groups, especially in remote settings. RTC focuses on typical trauma scenarios experienced in the Territory and is



2020/21

**Top End - Northern Territory**

Patients treated and transported **7,448**



delivered through practical scenario-based training that includes story-telling and yarning circles. The course draws upon participants' own experiences and skills and reflects the remoteness of the Territory and the many different languages spoken in the areas where we deliver the course.

### **Woolworths Fruit for Kids**

CareFlight, in partnership with Woolworths, delivers fresh fruit to children in remote communities as part of the Remote Free Fruit for Kids program.

Each week, about 135 kilograms of fresh fruit is delivered by CareFlight across the different community clinics who have enthusiastically welcomed the program. As well as clinic deliveries, fruit boxes are also delivered to local schools.

This program, in partnership with Woolworths, is one way that CareFlight works to improve patient outcomes.

### **East Arnhem Community Helicopter (EACH)**

CareFlight continues to work with the East Arnhem community to develop a business case for a helicopter to deliver timely and reliable access to medical care for residents in the East Arnhem Land region, including the Laynhapuy Homelands and Groote Eylandt.



Registrar ready to take on winch training in the Top End.

## Community Education

### Mitch Gawthorn's story

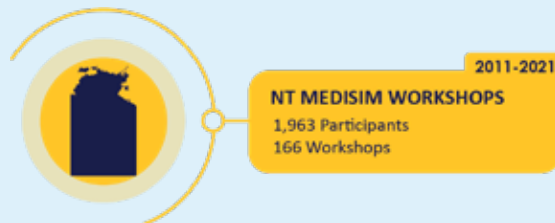
Mitch Gawthorn participated in CareFlight's MediSim Trauma Care Workshop in Kakadu in 2018. Shortly after, he was the first responder at the scene of a car crash. Mitch explains how CareFlight's training gave him the skills to save lives.

I participated in CareFlight's MediSim Trauma Care Workshop where I was taught how to treat catastrophic bleeds, stop haemorrhaging, extricate people from vehicles, maintain airways and handover to emergency crews. These skills are essential because people in the NT live remotely and could be hundreds of kilometres away from hospital.

After I did the training, I was the first responder to an accident in a remote area of Kakadu National Park.

On arrival at the scene, it was quite chaotic. A car had veered off the side of the road and another car was overturned. I was able to use what I had learnt in the CareFlight training to assess the scene and build an understanding of where I needed to prioritise my assistance.

An elderly man was sitting on the side of the road with a large laceration to his forehead. I knew that I needed to bandage him up to prevent any further blood loss. We also needed to ensure that a woman who was trapped in her vehicle could be extricated safely. The main priority was to ensure her head was stable. The patient involved in the overturned vehicle had a suspected leg fracture. Using the skills learnt



in the course I was able to place her leg in a splint to ensure that it was kept stable during transportation.

It was a relief when CareFlight arrived because I knew they would get the patients to hospital safely.

“CareFlight's training gave me the skills to save lives.”



Mitch Gawthorn completed CareFlight's MediSim training.



## CareFlight Stories

### Our COVID response in the Top End

#### Our COVID-safe measures

Throughout this challenging year, we needed to find ways to continue providing patient care and lifesaving services to the community whilst also protecting the community and frontline staff from potential transmission.

Some of the things we needed to consider included managing airflow in our cabins as well as the need to separate the patient in the cabin from the aircrew upfront. Administering oxygen and medications such as Ventolin, which could possibly increase the risk of COVID transmission, also had to be managed appropriately.

To minimise contact between our operational and non-operational staff, we reconfigured our hangars and operation areas into separate red and blue zones.

#### Heat stress

While medical staff across the world struggled with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), our frontline staff had additional problems. In the second half of the year, humidity levels reached 80-90% and daily temperatures were up to 40°C and even higher in the cabin when loading patients. So, whilst wearing PPE helped to protect staff from the virus, it created a new subset of problems due to the heat.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion such as fatigue, headache and nausea are well known. However, extended periods of heat which

increase a person's core body temperature has further impacts on concentration, decision-making and execution of physical skills. The dangers to our operational team and their ability to treat patients safely was all too real.

We developed a range of systems and interventions to keep our frontline staff cool which included the implementation of heat vests which pump cold water around the body to keep core temperature stable. Crushed ice was also provided to the team as an effective measure to lower core temperature. Rostering staff played a key role in our heat management strategy as we had to ensure we hired extra crew as well as increase rest times between PPE missions.

#### COVID-19 safety messages launched in nine Top End languages

We worked alongside the Aboriginal Interpreter Service to create several COVID-19 community safety videos in nine different Aboriginal languages.

The videos urged residents in remote communities not to put off emergency treatment due to fear of catching the virus.

The videos, delivered in Yolngu Matha, Anindilyakwa, Warlpiri, Murrinh-Patha, Kriol, Tiwi, Burrara, Kunwinjku, Maung and English, updated the community about the measures CareFlight were taking to limit disease transmission.

#### Looking ahead

At CareFlight, we've been analysing what we've learnt from our COVID-19 experience and

looking for ways to improve our operations to keep our team and patients safe.

The whole community and indeed the whole world, has been impacted by this pandemic. We all need to navigate this new normal together while at the same time focus on our collective and individual healing not just for now, but into the future.

*Dr John Roe  
CareFlight Medical Director,  
Northern Territory*



CareFlight Medical Director NT, Dr John Roe.

*Sun goes down in Darwin  
after a long day's work*



*Photographed by Krupa Mehta*

# Education and training

CareFlight's education team consists of experienced critical care doctors, flight nurses, paramedics, as well as administrative and logistics staff. The team is passionate about providing hands-on, real world training to strengthen the chain of care for our patients which commences at the time of injury or illness through to high-level hospital care.

Our goal is to empower people through education to save lives, speed patient recovery and serve the community. We achieve this through our three pillars of education – clinical, corporate and community.

## Community

- Trauma Care Workshop
- Sick and Injured Kids in the Bush
- Remote Trauma Course (RTC)

## Clinical

- Pre-Hospital Trauma Course (PHTC)
- CareFlight Aeromedical Retrieval Training (CART)
- Bespoke courses

## Corporate

- Leadership, teamwork and communication skills development using simulation
- Tailored workshops and courses
- CareFlight CRASH course
- First Aid and CPR in development

## Clinical

COVID-19 impacted the whole organisation. We embraced the challenge posed by government restrictions and came up with new ways to train staff, such as utilising video conferencing. Throughout this period, we maintained our internal training obligations.

Our commitment to our patients means providing the highest quality training to our registrars. To this end, CareFlight Education, led by our Medical Director, Dr Sam Bendall, submitted our successful application to offer the Diploma of Pre-Hospital and Retrieval Medicine (DipPHRM) to our registrars. The DipPHRM ensures we deliver a high standard of education across the organisation, from induction to ongoing education. As of October 2020, CareFlight NSW and TEMRS are both accredited as DipPHRM training sites.

In the NT, our education team also developed and delivered an induction program for new registrars which ensures they are well-equipped to commence their training with CareFlight.

Our clinical educators team designed and developed the CareFlight Aeromedical Retrieval Training course (CART) for external students which has proven to be an outstanding success. Existing courses including the prehospital trauma course for internal and external students, the mines paramedic



program and rapid response training for paramedics continue to be well received.

Additionally, over the last 12 months, clinical education has reviewed, upgraded and uploaded 112 online modules.

## Corporate

CareFlight's corporate education suite provides industry-specific courses to ensure that both management teams and frontline staff have the compliance, competence and confidence to deal with traumatic incidents they may face in their daily work.

Education and training have also developed a number of programs for students outside of CareFlight that will be run under our Corporate training banner. We have developed the CareFlight Crash course, a course for non-clinical personnel to be able to better manage a trauma patient at the scene of a severe road accident. We are also offering our CART and PHTC offering to external Health professionals.



## The Chain of Care



All these programs align with our goal of strengthening the 'chain of care'.

As one of Australia's leading education providers in the aeromedical and pre-hospital field, our goal is to see corporate education help us deliver on our mission and purpose as a not-for-profit organisation.

### Community

Our community education courses have been developed with our mission firmly in mind. For a decade now, we have upskilled non-medical emergency services personnel, first responders and lay people to be able to provide critically injured people with emergency trauma care. We have only been able to offer these vital lifesaving courses thanks to generous community support.

We know that the first few minutes after someone is injured are critical and the sooner treatments commence, the greater the chance of survival and recovery. Our courses empower first responders and emergency services personnel and help to maintain lifesaving capabilities within communities.

The Community Education team have continued to innovate and roll out courses despite the challenges arising from COVID-19. Hundreds of emergency service volunteers have undertaken the trauma care workshop, whilst remote clinics are supported and given free training in paediatric and neo-natal patient care through our Sick and Injured Kids in the Bush outreach program.

In addition, the Northern Territory education team developed and rolled out the unique Remote Trauma Course – a program designed specifically to suit the Northern Territory setting and the needs of the community.

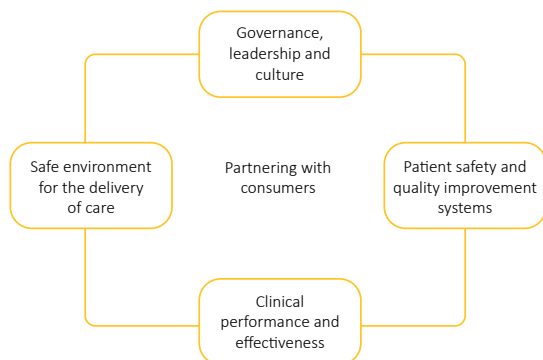


The Pre-Hospital Trauma Course in action at CareFlight's Westmead base.

# Clinical governance

Clinical governance is a systematic approach to maintaining and improving the quality of patient care within a clinical care setting, health program or health system.

Put simply, good clinical governance is doing the right thing, at the right time, by an appropriately qualified, credentialed, trained, and resourced person or team, using a best practice, evidence-based approach in partnership with the patient. The organisation employing that person or team must be accountable for the actions of its staff, value its staff (appraise and develop them), minimise risk, and learn and improve from feedback provided and from its incidents.



Clinical Governance has five domains, all of which are equally as important as each other, and put the consumer at the centre of its services.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. National Model Clinical Governance Framework. Sydney: ACSQHC; 2017.

## Our Clinical governance

Despite the challenges COVID-19 presented over the last year, CareFlight has stood resolute in its commitment to cementing and maintaining a strong system of Clinical Governance.

To that end, we appointed a dedicated Head of Clinical Governance, Ken McNoe, and National Clinical Equipment Manager, Ramesh Ravindran, supporting our operations nationally. In addition, we created new Medical Director and Deputy Medical Director positions who will work closely with the Head of Clinical Governance and Nursing directors to drive our governance processes and procedures. Two Senior Flight Nurse positions, with dedicated non-clinical portfolios concentrating on clinical governance, were also created.

We also revised our clinical governance framework to more accurately reflect and incorporate CareFlight operations nationally.

We are investing in software and processes to improve our services. This includes the procurement and implementation of new clinical equipment management software; enabling an up-to-date record of the location, maintenance, service, and status of clinical equipment throughout the organisation in real time. Procurement is also underway for a new Electronic Medical Record system to replace the Retrieval Database (RDB).

We have developed new feedback processes that enable consumers to easily provide feedback through a number of platforms and embedding that feedback into our Quality Improvement System in order to drive service development and design.

We recognise the potential psychological impact that some missions may have on frontline staff and, as such, have developed new support services for the identification and recognition of such missions. We have also added extra education and training for all staff.

As we transition into Standards 2, our NSQHS accreditation has been extended.

*Clinical Governance is an integrated component of corporate governance of health service organisations. It ensures that everyone – from frontline clinicians to managers and members of governing bodies, such as boards – is accountable to patients and the community for assuring the delivery of health services that are safe, effective, integrated, high quality and continuously improving.*

- The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

## Patient Story

### Lochie O'Fee

Childhood inevitably brings the all too familiar bumps, bruises, coughs and colds. So, when 11-year-old Lochie came inside, complaining of a headache after having spent time jumping on the family's trampoline, his parents weren't too concerned. After all, it was just a headache, they thought.

Unfortunately, Lochie's "headache" turned out to be far worse than they could have imagined.

Within seconds, Lochie's pain became excruciating. Clutching his head and screaming in pain, Lochie suddenly lost consciousness and stopped breathing.

Lochie's parents sprang into action. Brooke called 000 while his father, Todd, administered CPR.

Within a few short minutes CareFlight was on the way. On board the emergency helicopter, were two CareFlight specialist doctors Dr Alex Doig and Dr Chris Cheeseman.

Landing at a nearby oval, they were escorted to the O'Fee home. Despite having been on the trampoline, he showed no signs of bruising, cuts or scrapes which should have been present if he'd sustained a traumatic injury to the head. The CareFlight doctors determined his symptoms were, in fact, consistent with a bleed to the brain.

Once stabilised, Lochie was transferred to the CareFlight helicopter and flown to the nearest Children's Hospital. His prospects of

survival were very low without CareFlight's intervention, as Lochie was suffering from a brain aneurysm, a condition not only rare in children but life-threatening at any age.

Thanks to CareFlight's rapid emergency response, Lochie not only survived, but has made a remarkable recovery and has since returned to school.

**Lochie's  
headache  
turned out to be  
far worse than  
they could have  
imagined.**



Lochie O'Fee (2nd left) with his family



## CareFlight Stories

### Our ambassador for mental health

One of our own aeromedical specialists, Dr Caroline Macari, knows about grief. She's lived it. Indeed, it is her experience that has led her to become a better doctor and a CareFlight ambassador for mental health.

Speaking at the 2021 Frontline Mental Health Conference in March, Caroline shared with the audience the tumultuous years following her brother's death from Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

"I worked as a doctor for 15 years – happily dealing with all the horrors I saw. We have a wonderful policy that governs our life and keeps our minds off the pain. All this changed when my older brother died of a rare and aggressive lymphoma. I developed life-changing anxiety and have spent the last three years dealing with how to do my job with grief in my heart and a little monster on my shoulder whispering in my ear that I am not good enough."

After years of self-learning about grief, Caroline has turned her experience into a positive one by helping lead the mental health and wellbeing working group at CareFlight and becoming a mental health mentor.

"I can honestly say that I had a career before my brother died and a career after. This was formed through discovery of how to survive life and by having, not just sympathy, but a newfound empathy for grief and people struggling through life."

Caroline now heads up the mental health and wellbeing group at CareFlight which is doing its best to create a mentally safe workplace. This has included the implementation of mental health initiatives such as training for managers through Black Dog, psychological first aid training, and a 15-minute exercise challenge, to name a few.

"CareFlight has embraced the development of a mentally safe workplace and by attending the Frontline Mental Health conference we aim to bring back and incorporate ideas from across Australia to further improve the mental health care we provide for all our staff."

*Dr Caroline Macari  
Aeromedical specialist*

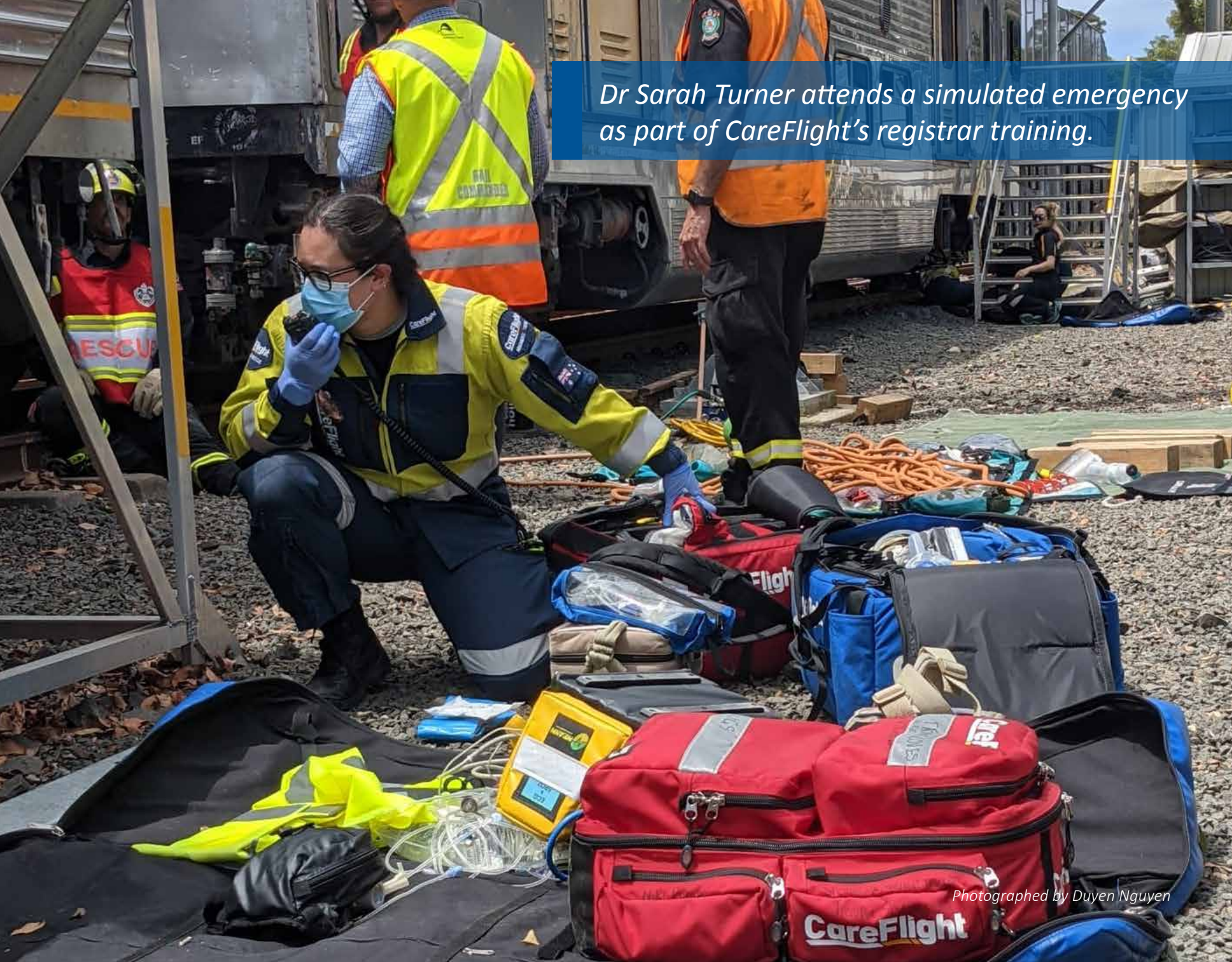
“Caroline has turned her experience into a positive one by helping lead the mental health and wellbeing group at CareFlight.”



Aeromedical specialist, Dr Caroline Macari, takes to the skies.



*Dr Sarah Turner attends a simulated emergency as part of CareFlight's registrar training.*



*Photographed by Duyen Nguyen*



# Safety and quality

Safety and quality continue to be the drivers behind every aspect of CareFlight's work. Ensuring we meet and exceed the regulatory requirements to conduct air ambulance work forms the basis of our commitment to delivering operational excellence for our patients.

## Audits

During this financial year, our safety team undertook 132 internal audits to ensure our operations were performing to our own high standards of safety and quality. We also audited 17 of our critical suppliers to ensure the best quality and standards of service are expected and delivered across our operations.

Additionally, third party audits were conducted across a range of our operations, including the



USAF Commercial Air Review Board (CARB) Audit and US Department of Defence pre-deployment to NT exercises, benchmarking our operations against US Military best practice. Surveillance audits for our ongoing ISO9001 (Quality), NSQHSS accreditation, AS4801 (safety) and ISO14001 (environment) certifications were also undertaken.

CareFlight engaged external consultants, Air Safety Navigators, to conduct an audit across our Flight Operations and Engineering to benchmark our safety systems, processes and organisational structure. The recommendations from the audit are currently being worked through, and when implemented, will reinforce and further enhance CareFlight's safety culture.

These external audits continue to ensure we are assessed against industry and global standards as well as client expectations and demonstrate, across this broad range of external parties, that we continue to meet and exceed compliance requirements for safety and quality.



Our aircrew stayed COVID safe.







2020/2021

**7,980 to 8,800**

The number of patients supported grew by more than **10%**





## Aviation Safety Management System

CareFlight developed a stand-alone Safety Management System (SMS) for aviation activities in March 2020. CareFlight's Aviation SMS aligns with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority's (CASA) regulatory requirements which underlines that safety management is as important to an organisation's business survival as financial management. The system's implementation ensures CareFlight achieves one of civil aviation's key goals: enhanced safety performance through the identification of hazards and reducing these hazards until they are As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP).

We have also introduced a Change Management Process to control changes that impact our processes, procedures, products and services with the objective to ensure that any safety risks resulting from change are reduced to ALARP. Change Management has been applied to the introduction of the H145 and G150 aircraft and is currently ongoing for the re-introduction of the B412 aircraft.

We have also improved our Safety Investigation Process to align with the International Civil Aviation Organizations (ICAO) standards. The key purpose is to enhance aviation safety by determining the causes of serious incidents / accidents, and making safety recommendations intended to prevent recurrence. We have also introduced an Aviation Safety Action Group to oversee operational safety within Flight Operations and Engineering.

## Certification and accreditation

Aviation	Medical	Mgt Systems	Training
Air Operator's certificate CASA	Australian College for Emergency Medicine	 Quality ISO 9001 SAI GLOBAL	CAR217 CASA
Certificate of Approval CASA	Australian & New Zealand College of Anaesthetists	 Health & Safety ISO 45001 SAI GLOBAL	Part 141/142 CASA
	Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine	 Environmental ISO 14001 SAI GLOBAL	Australian Skills Quality Authority RTO
	European Aeromedical Institute		
	College of Intensive Care Medicine		
	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners		
	 QIP Quality Improvement Performance		



Our crew conducts daily checks on our aircraft.

# Medevacs

Operating out of bases at Kingsford Smith Airport in Sydney and Darwin International Airport in the Northern Territory, our Air Ambulances assist people who urgently need interstate transport for critical treatment due to injury or illness. We also transport overseas patients who need to be brought to Australia for vital medical treatment.

Our team at CareFlight Air Ambulance continued to provide an important national and international aeromedical service for most of last year. From May 2020 to January 2021, our Sydney-based Air Ambulance crew attended missions to Noumea, Honiara, Bali, Dili and Norfolk Island, helping to bring sick and injured Australians back home. The strength of our operational planning, which included the use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and inbuilt contingencies, allowed us to operate with no incidence of COVID-19 transmission.

Since January 2021, government COVID-19 border restrictions have limited our service from Sydney and we continue to be guided by state, federal and international regulations.

## **New stretcher bridge allows for more effective patient transfer**

We are committed to ongoing development and innovation to ensure the best patient outcomes. In October, our new stretcher bridge for jets became operational. The new

bridge which is mounted on the stretcher allows patients to be transported along with all necessary life-support machines. This means the smooth transportation of both the patient and equipment from the jet to hospital.

## **Our fleet**

CareFlight is the only medical retrieval organisation in Australasia that owns and operates its own fleet of dedicated jets, King Air turbo prop aircraft and helicopters providing a national and international air ambulance service. We also provide road ambulances, when required, for transfer from the tarmac to hospital.

## **Our medical crew**

Our specialist clinical teams are highly skilled and are trained to work together to provide the best clinical care for our patients. Our doctors are specialists in emergency medicine, intensive care or anaesthetics. Our nurses are from intensive care and emergency departments and are aviation-nursing trained.



Our new stretcher bridge allows for more effective patient transfer.

## CareFlight Stories

### CareFlight's doctor shares his passion for aeromedicine

When I started my medical education in England I had no idea that one day I would move across the globe to become Medical Director on one of the world's fastest doctor-staffed helicopter operations.

I began my surgical training in the United Kingdom where I specialised in neurosurgery but ended up moving to a role in the emergency department of the hospital which I loved.

After a few years in the emergency department, I attended a recruitment event where I discovered an Australian aeromedical organisation that was setting up their base in Toowoomba, Queensland. They were searching for registrars to staff their new helicopter service. So, I flew to Australia and completed my registrar training here.

I leapt into aeromedicine because I find the challenge of looking after critically ill or injured patients in a prehospital environment rewarding. When you're working in the emergency department, by the time a patient has reached the hospital doors, you feel as if you are stepping into a narrative mid-way. It has been some time since their incident, and they may have already been treated and stabilised by various emergency services personnel.

In aeromedicine, you're given the opportunity to fly straight to the scene of the incident. I

know that by being with a patient as soon as something goes wrong, I'm giving them the best chance at survival and recovery.

I love the out-of-the-box and unique challenges I face with each patient. One hour I can be treating a crush injury on a busy motorway, and later that afternoon, I'm in a paddock treating an injured worker while some horses look on. There is no standard cookie cutter approach and I have to use my resourcefulness to provide the best level of care for my patient.

From Toowoomba, I moved to New South Wales where I began my time at CareFlight as a retrieval specialist on the CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter. As someone who is working in emergency and trauma care, you're constantly faced with many trialing scenarios where those moments are often the worst in someone's life. While some days can be difficult, I know that I can depend on my colleagues for their support during and after the mission.

Working in aeromedicine, you join a unique environment where you create special bonds with people dedicated to their work, creating close-knit teams. All contributions and ideas are recognised and the sense of belonging is almost tangible in the air.

In addition to my role on the CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter, I am also a Medical Retrieval Consultant in the Northern Territory. This role provides clinical governance for retrievals and support for clinics managing patients in a more challenging and austere setting. It is a stark juxtaposition to my role in Sydney where I have access to the

latest innovations in medicine but is equally rewarding.

Seven years after I joined the CareFlight family, I was appointed as Medical Director – CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter during an incredibly tumultuous and exciting time for the organisation. 2020 was certainly an unprecedented year: battling COVID-19 and implementing new procedures for patient healthcare.

This year and into the future, I am excited to work with the team to herald in new clinical innovations for our aeromedical crews.

*Dr Chris Cheeseman  
Medical Director CRRH*



Medical Director CRRH, Dr Chris Cheeseman.



# Reconciliation Action Plan

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) aims to embed reconciliation into every aspect of the organisation. Over the past year, we have continued our reconciliation journey in a number of ways.

## Supporting young Indigenous Australians

CareFlight has partnered with Indigenous Youth Mobility Pathways Project (IYMP) to provide external mentoring support for Indigenous employees. Two CareFlight NT engineering apprentices and one new CareFlight Administration trainee are currently being supported by IYMP. Their support helps these young Indigenous Australians achieve their long-term goals.

## Prioritising Indigenous employment

CareFlight is prioritising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants for all suitable roles in CareFlight and has created identified positions in a number of departments through the implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Career Development Strategy.

## Communicating our RAP deliverables to staff

We have developed an e-newsletter to keep all CareFlight employees up-to-date with our RAP deliverables as well as raise awareness of significant dates and celebrations such as NAIDOC week and Reconciliation Week

and provide resources to support the team members on the reconciliation journey.

## NAIDOC Week 2020

In celebration of NAIDOC Week, CareFlight invited Darug Cultural Educator and Artist, Chris Tobin, to our national headquarters to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Uncle Chris provided a unique and enriching experience of indigenous traditions.

CareFlight is proud to shine a light on the rich culture of First Australians.



L>R Jordan Sing (Engineering Apprentice), Tanesha Graham (Administration Trainee), Kylie Rautoka (Career Employment Australia, IYMP), Justin Bodey (Engineering Apprentice).





*Our Education team hosts a MediSim workshop for CareFlight staff.*

*Photographed by Eliza Charlètt*



# People and culture

Despite the challenges of the past year, we continued to focus on and invest in our people. This investment ensures we have depth, capacity and capability across all areas of our operations to continue delivering the highest quality service to our patients.

## Providing essential training to all staff

We added an essential training package to our Learning Hub. As the name suggests, essential training is mandatory for all CareFlight staff and aims to ensure employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities. The learning modules cover six essential areas including Privacy, Work Health and Safety, Bullying Harassment and Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Social Media



Participants undertake hands-on Pre-Hospital Trauma Care (PHTC) training.





and Internet use. This training emphasises our commitment to providing a workplace that promotes the underlying values of fairness, respect and integrity.

### **Investing in our leaders**

We invested in a five-day Business Leadership course as part of the next stage in our leadership program, which commenced early in 2020. Run by the Australian Institute of Management (AIM), the course is described as a mini-MBA as it was developed using the key learning outcomes from AIM's three-year course. Offering the Business Leadership course to various members of our management team reaffirms our commitment to ensuring our leaders have the knowledge and skills to successfully lead CareFlight into the future.



Board winner, Jodie Mills.

### **Inaugural Board Award winners announced**

We announced the winners of our inaugural Annual Board Award which is the premier award a CareFlight employee can receive within our Reward and Recognition Program. It is awarded to two employees annually for their continued service and commitment to CareFlight. Northern Operations Manager, Jodie Mills, who has been with CareFlight for nine years, received the award for her dedication to excellence and her patient and crew focus. Retrieval Specialist and Director of Education, Dr Sam Bendall, who has been with CareFlight for 12 years, received the award for her incredible display of going "Above and Beyond" during a mammoth 31-hour patient retrieval.



Board winner, Dr Sam Bendall.

### **Quality communications**

We continued to provide our staff with weekly updates on evolving COVID-19 conditions in Australia as well as our organisational response to these changes. These e-newsletter updates provided staff with the security that we could continue delivering our essential services whilst keeping both our patients and staff safe.

We developed a fortnightly staff newsletter, Crew News, in July 2020 to provide staff with up-to-date information about our people. Crew News is our most read internal publication which highlights the importance of recognising our staff and their achievements.

### **Putting Mental Health and Wellbeing on the agenda**

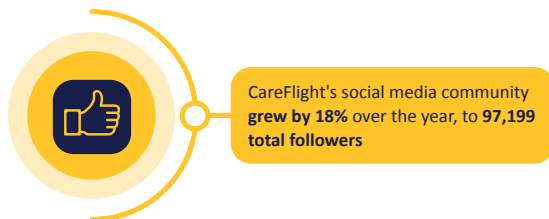
We continued to expand our Mental Health and Wellbeing initiatives. Recognising the potential mental health impacts on staff due to COVID-19, we provided our employees with information on available resources and where to access support. We also ran a 15-minute exercise challenge that not only provided staff with an engaging and fun competition but also ensured that staff were reminded daily of the benefits of fitness to both their physical and mental wellbeing.

We redeveloped our Flexible Work Policy in response to changing COVID-19 conditions and restrictions. Our revised policy which gives staff the flexibility to work from the office or remotely, recognises the benefits of flexible work arrangements to the mental and physical health of employees.

# Brand and reputation

Over the year, CareFlight's national profile continued to grow despite the unprecedented impact the pandemic had on our community events and education activities around the country. The high-profile work our teams undertake every day did not go unnoticed by the Australian public with almost 10,000 mentions in news media and millions of impressions of CareFlight posts from our followers on social media. The largest spikes in news coverage corresponded with the launch of two new aircraft, the H145 helicopter in New South Wales in February and G150 jet in the Top End in April.

This past year shows that CareFlight's greatest publicity undoubtedly comes from the tremendous public interest in our mission and the social impact of treating and transporting seriously injured and ill Australians. We salute our crew members who often capture and share incredible snapshots of their challenging work. You will see their photos in this annual report and frequently in our social media.



## A top trusted Australian charity

The Australian community placed a huge vote of confidence in CareFlight in the annual Australian Charity Reputation Ranking survey. For the third year in a row, CareFlight was ranked as one of the top three most trusted charities in Australia. CareFlight ranked second overall in the survey, which compares Australia's 40 largest charities.

As always, we are very grateful to our wonderful community of supporters Australia-wide, who work with us as we raise awareness of our cause and support for our service. It's thanks to your support that CareFlight is able to save lives, speed patient recovery and serve the community.



The year marked the launch of our national day for CareFlight, Mayday, which raised vital funds for our MediSim trauma care workshops. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the original plan for members of the community to come together and have a Cuppa for CareFlight was adapted for the climate of community lockdowns and social distancing. The event was run in a virtual format that allowed communities to come together digitally on social media and through a social media wall on CareFlight's website.



Our inaugural 'Cuppa for CareFlight' went virtual.

## Donor profile

### 101 year old major donor, Judith Green

Judith Green has been supporting CareFlight for over 20 years as a donor and CareFlight Bears collector.

Her own career, caring for the ill and vulnerable, started much earlier in 1939. Judith trained first as an Almoner, an earlier form of Social Worker, at the University of Sydney. Soon after graduating she enlisted in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) and worked in Kobe, Japan, after the war for two years, largely repatriating Australian Servicemen.

Back in Australia, Judith pursued a career in social work at the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital (now Westmead) and later at hospitals in the Southern Highlands. Perhaps her most extraordinary career project was to lead the care and rehabilitation of 118 orphans evacuated from Vietnam. These children arrived with no record of their parents, often with severe illness or disabilities and a need for complex care to help them find Australian foster families.

Ms Green was also a founding member of Meals on Wheels Australia, a founder of the Home and Community Care program, Chairman of the Australian Council of Social Service, President of the Bowral Show Society, and many other leadership roles caring for people in need.

When asked about the motivation behind her years of service to the community, Judith replied humbly, "If we saw a need, we tried to meet it in some way."

Judith's connection with CareFlight grew from her work in healthcare, where she saw the great work CareFlight does caring for trauma patients. She also vividly remembers CareFlight supporting her own local community when a CareFlight helicopter transported a severely ill child to a major city hospital for lifesaving care.

Judith has recently chosen to support the special appeal funding CareFlight's new H145 aeromedical helicopter.

CareFlight is honoured to have Judith's ongoing interest and support.



CareFlight donor, Judith Green.

## Reporting on Impact

CareFlight supporters now receive additional reports on how their donations are having a real, practical impact to improve the care of our patients across Australia. Each February, donors to CareFlight appeals receive an annual Impact Report. Supporters also receive quarterly philanthropy newsletters which report on current and new CareFlight services and innovations, patient care statistics and stories of recent patients, frontline staff, supporters and new projects needing funding.

In March, leading individual supporters were invited to a special morning tea and personal briefing on CareFlight's latest acquisition, the world-class H145 helicopter. Deputy Medical Director of the Rapid Response service, Dr Ruth Parsell and Rotary Wing Training Manager, Greg Ohlsson, provided personal briefings and interactive tours of the new helicopter. We look forward to hosting more special briefing events on CareFlight's frontline services in the future.



Donors view the new H145.



# Fundraising

As a charity, CareFlight relies on the generosity of donors, supporters and volunteers to help fulfill our mission. We fundraise through multiple channels including direct mail and digital appeals, regular giving, events, bequests, selling bears and raffle tickets.

Due to the generous support of the community, we have managed to substantially increase our fundraising revenue. This is despite the challenges of the past year which necessitated the cancellation of our revenue-raising events such as the NT and Sydney gala balls, due to COVID-19.

This year we were able to deliver a seven per cent increase in revenue growth, with most of our direct marketing channels contributing to this growth.



Louise and Matthew Ginn cycled 2000km for CareFlight.

## Fundraising channels deliver revenue growth

### Regular Givers



**8% growth from 20,221 to 21,898** monthly regular givers, due to success of our Digital Telemarketing regular giving program

### Direct and Digital Mail



**23% increase in revenue of \$1,939 million, compared to \$1,573 million in 2019-20**

### Rescue Raffle Program



**42% increase from 5,452 to 7,720** fortnightly tickets sold

### CareFlight Bear Club



**47% increase from 1,054 to 1,554** monthly payment collectors

## Engaging with the community, virtually

Due to COVID-19, we needed to pivot our face-to-face fundraising events to virtual ones. In May 2020, we launched our first National Mayday Cuppa for CareFlight event. Despite not being able to gather and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee for CareFlight with friends, our reformatted event became virtual and was highly successful. In July, we launched another digital event, the CareFlight Challenge, a virtual version of CareFlight's Woodford to Glenbrook Classic. This new challenge encouraged people to stay fit and active, whilst at the same time, raising funds for CareFlight. These two new initiatives raised around \$100,000 nationally in their very first year.

We launched a virtual Christmas card option into market in November. This allowed family, friends and colleagues to donate to CareFlight on behalf of a loved one and send a CareFlight digital Christmas card anywhere in the world.

## Riding for CareFlight

Taking to their wheels in support of CareFlight were Louise Ginn and her 15-year old son, Matthew, who rode 2,000km over 17 days in April and May from the steps of Ballarat, Victoria to Uluru, NT. Riding an average of 135 km a day on a tandem bike, Louise and Matthew not only completed this amazing feat, but also raised over \$39,000 for CareFlight.

## Fundraising in the NT

A number of fundraising initiatives brought in vital funds for CareFlight in the NT:

- Over 200 participants joined our inaugural Territory Rescue Challenge in July 2020 raising \$53,000 for CareFlight. Travelling by any non-motorised means across various distances, participants were taken on a virtual journey learning about CareFlight and what happens during missions. Participants chose between six missions ranging in length from 50 to 1,000km to complete over the four weeks of July. At each stage of their travels, participants unlocked new information about a real-life mission. Not only did the Challenge raise vital funds for CareFlight but also provided a platform to inform people about our varied operations.



CareFlight's Rescue Challenge was a huge success in the NT.



Our volunteers gift-wrapped for CareFlight.

- Our fabulous volunteers spent 14 days at Gateway shopping centre providing a Christmas gift-wrapping service, and in the process, raised over \$8,000 for CareFlight.
- CareFlight joined the excitement of Darwin's inaugural Mango Madness Festival in late October 2020 raising funds from merchandise sales, our spin and win wheel and as the official beneficiary of the festival.



CareFlight joined the fun of the first Mango Madness festival.

- We continue to be supported by the Community Bank of Coolalinga and were the beneficiaries of the Golf Day in Humpty Doo in September. Bendigo Bank is a regular supporter of CareFlight in the NT, providing over \$10,000 in funding last year.



General Manager NT, Philip Roberts receives a generous donation from Bendigo Bank.

- We held two successful raffles last year: The Territory Rescue Raffle which was run in August, following the success of the Territory Rescue Challenge, and our regular Christmas Raffle. We raised over \$18,000 from these raffles.
- We continued to receive support from our community supporters including the Rotary Club of Litchfield Palmerston and Nightcliff Sports Club through meat raffles and TOMRA reverse vending recycling fundraising.





*Our Darwin hangar*

*Photographed by Krupa Mehta*



## Patient Story

### A fun day turns tragic

It was meant to be a fun day out at the lake with friends. Nothing out of the ordinary for a group of teenagers. But the fun day quickly turned into a nightmare for 16-year-old Riley Hilditch.

Playing around with his mates, Riley dove into the lake not realising it was too shallow. Hitting his head on a rock, Riley sustained a large open wound to the back of his head and tragically broke his neck. Coming up to the surface, Riley desperately tried to roll over. Despite his efforts, he remained face-down. He was drowning.

His friends watched from the shoreline believing Riley was just playing but when they saw blood gushing from his wound realised the severity of his injuries. Frantically, they retrieved their mate from the water and called 000.

Just minutes later, CareFlight's Rapid Rescue Helicopter landed with a critical care specialist doctor and intensive care paramedic on board.

Although he couldn't feel anything below his neck, Riley did not realise the extent of his injuries.

"I only realised it was serious when I was placed on the stretcher and they moved me really slowly to the helicopter," Riley explained.

Riley was airlifted by CareFlight to hospital where he spent 40 weeks in treatment and rehabilitation.

He is now a paraplegic with limited use of his arms but despite his condition, Riley is grateful to be alive.

"There aren't any words to explain how thankful I am to CareFlight. They saved my life."

“ I only realised it was serious when I was placed onto the stretcher and they moved me really slowly to the helicopter ”



Riley, his mum, Suzanne and sister, Taylah.

# Sponsors

## National sponsorship and support

### Major Partners



### Corporate Partners



### Community Partners



### Government Partners



We wish to also acknowledge the following trusts and foundations, clubs and community groups:

- Aboriginal Benefits Foundation Trust
- Allport Bequest
- Bendigo Bank
- Blacktown Worker's Club
- Cecilia Kilkeary Foundation Ltd
- City Tattersalls Club
- Club Jervis Bay
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Corio Foundation
- Cumberland City Council
- Damien Greer Lawyers
- Energy Efficient Communities Program
- Fairfield Club Grants
- Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal
- Honda Foundation
- Humpty Dumpty Foundation
- Inger Rice
- James Frizelle
- Lendlease Community Fund
- Mayfield Ex Services Club
- Nightcliff Sports Club
- NT Community Benefit Fund
- Office of Responsible Gambling
- Orange City Council
- Port City Bowling Club
- Port Macquarie Panthers
- The Profield Foundation
- Ronald Geoffrey Arnott Foundation
- Rotary Club of Litchfield Palmerston
- RP Medical Fund
- Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club
- Serco Foundation
- Swiss Re Foundation
- The Ruth Marie Sampson Foundation
- The Shellharbour Club
- Transurban Roads
- Variety - The Children's Charity
- The Woodend Foundation



The SmoothFM team meet the CareFlight crew.

## Club CareFlight - SME Support Program

Thank you to local small-medium business supporters who have renewed or joined as Platinum, Gold and Silver members of Club CareFlight, helping to save lives and speed recovery for patients in their communities:

### Gold

- Wagner Group Services
- Tong Li Supermarkets
- UNITY4
- South Coast Heli Escapes
- Robson Civil Projects Pty Ltd
- Fusion 5
- Edenvale Beverages

### Silver

- Active Group Pty Ltd
- Bretts Automotive
- DEED Consulting
- Don Clark Tractors
- F & S J Maione
- Findex Australia
- Forklogic Pty Ltd
- Local Government Engineering Services
- Malcolm Smith Pty Ltd
- Priority Towing Service
- Sarmort Engineering Pty Ltd
- Supercare Cleaning Pty Ltd

## Gifts in Wills

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the families of the following very special supporters who left a gift to CareFlight in their Will.

- The Estate of the Late Shirley Apelt
- The Estate of the Late Verna Arthur
- The Estate of the Late Bronwyn Cooper
- The Estate of the Late Shauna Cooper
- The Estate of the Late Audrey Donnellan
- The Estate of the Late Pearl Harris
- The Estate of the Late Jean McDonald
- The Estate of the Late Marshall Gittins
- The Estate of the Late David Hegarty
- The Estate of the Late Darlene Oson
- The Estate of the Late Joan Taylor
- The Estate of the Late Margaret Wadds
- The Estate of the Late Margaret Watts

### Vale, Robert Ingham AO

We acknowledge the passing of leading Australian philanthropist, businessman and CareFlight supporter, Robert (Bob) Ingham, in September 2020. Bob was a generous supporter of CareFlight's lifesaving services over decades, including as an early major funder of the new Sydney-based H145 aeromedical helicopter. Bob will be greatly missed by many.



# Financial performance

The following is a summary extracted from CareFlight's audited financial statements for the year ending 30 April 2021.

This information is available at [careflight.org](http://careflight.org)

<b>Consolidated statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>101,229,368</b>	<b>95,837,234</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Operations and administration- costs of personnel	(57,918,535)	(54,815,776)
Direct costs of aeromedical operations	(15,898,339)	(16,502,884)
Costs of fundraising- donations and sponsorship	(3,689,923)	(3,117,818)
Costs of fundraising- merchandising and events	(1,998,709)	(2,198,793)
Depreciation- property, plant and equipment	(2,511,802)	(2,371,816)
Depreciation- right-of-use assets	(7,116,274)	(6,599,625)
Impairment and revaluation adjustment	(2,127,129)	-
Insurance	(1,096,682)	(963,111)
Support costs	(5,112,640)	(4,478,680)
<b>Total expenditure before net finance expense</b>	<b>(97,470,033)</b>	<b>(91,048,503)</b>
<b>Surplus before net finance expense</b>	<b>3,759,335</b>	<b>4,788,731</b>
Finance income	111,135	111,355
Finance expense	(2,512,100)	(2,446,923)
<b>Net finance expense</b>	<b>(2,400,965)</b>	<b>(2,335,568)</b>
<b>Net surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,358,370</b>	<b>2,453,163</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income/(expense) items that may be reclassified to surplus</b>		
Revaluation of investments	370,164	(208,133)
Revaluation of non-current assets	(3,291,163)	(808,590)
<b>Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year</b>	<b>(1,562,629)</b>	<b>1,436,440</b>

## Consolidated statement of financial position

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	22,931,776	13,383,182
Trade and other receivables	6,299,537	9,340,886
Inventories	570,519	599,753
Investments	2,498,957	2,060,632
	32,300,789	25,384,453
Assets held for sale	2,285,919	-
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>34,586,708</b>	<b>25,384,453</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	12,486,301	12,906,514
Right-of-use assets	51,622,416	45,985,476
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>64,108,717</b>	<b>58,891,990</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>98,695,425</b>	<b>84,276,443</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade payables	6,070,648	5,946,188
Income received in advance	10,493,095	6,110,661
Leases	11,098,396	17,200,095
Employee benefits	5,661,089	4,546,324
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>33,323,228</b>	<b>33,803,268</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Leases	41,152,986	24,568,425
Employee benefits	1,057,289	1,180,199
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>42,210,275</b>	<b>25,748,624</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>75,533,503</b>	<b>59,551,892</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>23,161,922</b>	<b>24,724,551</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Reserves	3,393,742	6,314,741
Retained surplus	19,768,180	18,409,810
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>23,161,922</b>	<b>24,724,551</b>



# CareFlight

[www.careflight.org](http://www.careflight.org)

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