

# CareFlight news

Issue 65 | Autumn 2014

## Expert treatment starts on the spot



Young Luke with his CareFlight life-saving mission crew, from left, Rob Bartolacci (doctor), David Gardiner (air crewman), Ben Southers (ambulance intensive care paramedic) and Ian Smart (pilot).

Young Luke's survival is testament to CareFlight's 27-year tradition of flying the hospital to the patient.

By dedicated helicopter, aeroplane or medi-jet, reaching thousands of patients every year around Australia and beyond, our CareFlight doctors, nurses and paramedics rush a hospital level of care to immediately start treatment. Only after our on-the-spot treatment does consideration turn to that of transporting the patient to the appropriate hospital. That's the CareFlight difference.

Seven-year-old Luke made his way back to the family hinterland property after falling from the small dirt bike he was riding. He'd hit his head and, even though he was wearing a riding helmet, the trauma of the impact was starting to become evident.

There was no bruising, no bleeding and not a scratch on his body, but Luke was rolling around on the ground saying his head was sore. Alarmed when he started to become drowsy and unwell, his parents set out to drive their son to the local hospital.

In the car Luke's condition became worse so his parents promptly called ambulance paramedics who alerted

CareFlight. Their "000" call would save Luke's life.

Minutes later, after landing beside the car, the CareFlight specialist doctor worked with paramedics to start treating Luke's head injury.

As his mum, Therese, later said: "I could hardly bear to watch – but I knew Luke was in the best hands. It was like having the hospital right there on the scene."

Quickly our doctor gave the boy an anaesthetic and placed him on a ventilator to control his breathing, to ensure vital oxygenation of the brain.

The flight to the specialist hospital took just 12 minutes – while in the car it took his parents another hour to cover the same distance through weekend traffic.

Again, from Therese: "The speed with which the CareFlight team reached Luke to start treatment was a big factor in his recovery."

Your donation to CareFlight, which is fully tax-deductible, is needed so we can continue to bring a hospital level of medical care to future patients – to start expert treatment without delay. See the donation coupon on the back page of this edition of CareFlight News. ✕

### New base speeds response to emergencies

The impressive new operations base and hangar provided to CareFlight is helping to speed up our charity's response to medical emergencies across the vast Top End of Australia's Northern Territory.

It is now allowing all aspects of CareFlight operations to be together under the same roof – and a big roof at that – our aircraft, flight nurses, doctors, pilots, air crew officers, logistic co-ordination centre, engineering and support staff. Being a busy 24-hour operation, there are also rooms to allow necessary crew rest.

The hangar can accommodate all our B200 King Air turbo-prop aircraft as well as Darwin's BK117 CareFlight TIO Rescue Helicopter. The hangar layout allows us to position the two duty King Air aircraft and the helicopter on the front line of the hangar, ready for immediate dispatch, with ample room behind for our engineering staff to conduct the vital maintenance that supports our 24/7 service.

Built by NT Airports, to CareFlight specification, the hangar and operations centre was funded by the NT Health Department. It provides, for the first time, a purpose-built aeromedical facility for Darwin with protection from both hot sun and monsoon storms. ✕

An indication of the size of the new aeromedical base at Darwin is the number of aircraft which CareFlight can now operate and maintain under cover.





Left: Ineke Stuadacher. Right: CareFlight's Dr Ken Harrison conducts a MediSim course in Burnie.

### Ineke's dedication flies missions

Finding good homes for CareFlight bears raises vital funds to keep our doctors flying. Our bears are ably telemarketed by Unity4 – including agent Ineke Stuadacher who was rewarded as Unity4 employee of the quarter by having her name put on our rapid-response helicopter for two months.

### Students raise helicopter support

When the CareFlight TIO Rescue Helicopter made a brief flight from Darwin Airport to land at Stuart Park Primary School, the welcome could not have been better.

The 450-strong school community has continued its fundraising support beyond the initial donation of \$500 handed over at a school assembly held just before the landing, raising over \$1,500 with raffles.

### Tasmania hails MediSim

Having been hailed by communities around the Australian mainland, for the first time late last year the CareFlight MediSim training team travelled to Tasmania to present trauma training courses at four locations.

Tasmanian rescue and emergency service plus national park personnel said they benefited from attending our high quality simulation-based trauma care workshops in Hobart, Strahan, Launceston and Burnie.

In all, 57 emergency service personnel attended the training knowing that, in many isolated areas, often these participants can be the first to arrive at the scene of a trauma incident. The feedback was excellent with the vast majority of quantitative responses rating the workshop 5 out of 5. One wrote: "I would put my life in any of your guys hands in a heartbeat – thank you."

MediSim is already back on the road for 2014 with courses lined up in Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and again in Tasmania.

### Eels kick off for us

The Dyldam Parramatta Eels are lining up special support from 2014 as CareFlight has become the National Rugby League club's charity partner.

CareFlight relationship manager Scott Monaghan said it is a good fit, with the Eels located just over the hill behind our Westmead base, and with both organisations sharing the same colours.

It's a three-year deal which extends beyond NSW as the Parramatta Eels also have partnered up with the NT Government which will see them play an annual competition game in the NT.

Other benefits which the Eels are extending include fundraising at their Parramatta home stadium, match tickets, a signed, framed jersey for fundraising and cross-promotional opportunities.

### Top End miners dig deep

Their latest donation brings to \$50,000 the total for the year which the Top End mining community has given to support CareFlight.

A handover of \$30,000 was a highlight of the annual gala dinner staged by the Darwin Mining Club in December.

The enthusiasm of 264 attendees on the night, along with early sponsorship bids for next year's golf day, shows strong support for CareFlight and an understanding of our medical support across the Top End. ✕

**For full details of upcoming events, check our website at [www.careflight.org](http://www.careflight.org)**

Clockwise from left: Student delight is captured in smiles as CareFlight gives School Captain and Year Six student Jaimee Murphy (seated) an opportunity to be shown over the helicopter by chief pilot Richard Sanford; first grader Darcy Lussick who has been appointed by the Eels as their CareFlight ambassador to attend events and community functions on our behalf; smiles say it all as this photo of the presentation shows featuring, from left, Darwin Mining Club president Wendy Oldham, Tanya Izod, Ian Badham and Drew Wagner who is executive director of the Minerals Council of Australia NT Division and also the Darwin Mining Club.



## Heartfelt thanks from little Bronte's parents

**G**len and Kylie Borg, who revived their toddler at Warnervale after she fell into their pool just after Christmas, have been in touch with CareFlight to pass on their heartfelt thanks for our timely help.

At the request of ambulance paramedics, CareFlight's rapid-response trauma team flew to the property so our

specialist doctor could help treat four-year-old Bronte then, after stabilisation, airlift her to the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Her mum Kylie, who made the "000" call as dad Glen and neighbour Peter Southam applied effective CPR, shared the flight with her daughter – only later admitting she was so focussed

there was no memory of the trip.

"Kylie and I want to let you know our little Bronte is doing really well. Back to normal and want to thank CareFlight for all your help," Glen said.

As a warning to other parents, Glen told Newcastle Herald reporter Ashleigh Gleeson that even though his hope was fading, he was determined not to give up performing CPR on an apparently lifeless Bronte when he pulled her from the backyard pool.

Then, after he pinched her nose and gave an extra big breath into her airway, Bronte's eyes opened and she cried out "mummy". It was one final blow, he admitted.

Glen and Kylie agreed to share their story, via the news media, in the hope it would highlight the importance of knowing CPR. "Without it, Bronte wouldn't have survived," Glen said. ✕



Glen and Kylie Borg with daughter Bronte and Peter Southam. Photo Jonathan Carroll, Newcastle Herald.

### Roadside surgery for injured boy

A CareFlight trauma doctor performed emergency roadside surgery on a critically injured young boy before flying him to hospital from a horror crash on the M5 at Mt Annan, in Sydney's south-west, just before Christmas.

Emergency services rushed to the crash just south of the Narellan Road off-ramps, with CareFlight landing on the southbound lanes which were blocked by the crash.

The driver of a concrete truck, aged in his 30s, was trapped and the occupants of a passenger van were injured in the crash.

The CareFlight doctor said the six-year-old boy suffered head, chest and pelvic injuries and leg fractures when he was thrown some 15 metres from the van by the force of the crash.

### Remote accidents injure trio

Three men were injured in two separate accidents at remote Northern Territory locations on one day in early January.

On Groote Eylandt, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, two men riding on the back of a utility were hurt when it rolled near the community of Umbakumba.

An 18-year-old suffered serious head injuries. CareFlight doctors and nurses flew to the island in two of our King Air aircraft to assist health clinic staff stabilise the man and place him in an

induced coma. A 24-year-old man was treated for chest and back injuries while the driver of the ute escaped with minor injuries and helped free the others from the overturned vehicle.

Then at Woodycupaldiya, 180 km east of Wadeye, a 65-year-old man was injured when a jack collapsed while he was working under a vehicle. He suffered leg injuries and, after treatment by clinic and CareFlight staff, was flown to Royal Darwin Hospital aboard the CareFlight TIO Rescue Helicopter.

### Rain triggers aerial search

The Top End's heavy holiday rain triggered an inadvertent emergency alert near the Adelaide River township, south of Darwin, on Boxing Day.

Following a high level sweep of the area by a rescue aircraft in the early hours, the crew of the CareFlight TIO Rescue Helicopter shortly after dawn tracked down the signal to a five-metre tinny parked under a tree near the village.

At the request of AMSA, shortly after sunrise, the Darwin-based CareFlight TIO Rescue Helicopter flew to the area and detected a signal from the unregistered beacon on a property six kilometres east of Adelaide River township. A crack in the unit's plastic casing allowed heavy rain to activate it, triggering the alert. ✕



Above: Emergency services combine to treat the injured at the crash which blocked the motorway at Mt Annan.

Right: The distress beacon which triggered the alert after it was disabled by the crew of Darwin's CareFlight TIO Rescue Helicopter.

Below: Ambulances transfer the injured men to CareFlight on Groote Eylandt.



# Jet dash to bring king-hit Matt from Bali to Perth

Over two months after his family asked CareFlight to stage an international jet rescue flight from Bali, Matt Scarff continues to make a slow recovery in an Australian hospital.

His sister Anna, who accompanied our team on the medi-jet chartered by CareFlight International Air Ambulance, feels the intervention helped save his life.

The medical team comprising Peter Valentine (doctor) and Belinda Nolan (intensive care flight nurse) rushed from Darwin to reach 41-year-old Matt then fly him to Royal Perth Hospital.

The popular Australian surf school instructor, originally from Melbourne, built a surfing reputation when at Byron Bay in NSW. He set up one of Bali's first surfing schools in 1999 and generously offered free lessons to orphans.

As an expat Matt was hailed a hero in the aftermath of the Bali bombing in 2002, helping people caught up in the terrorist attack which killed 88 Australians.

He received initial emergency surgery at Sanglah Hospital in Bali after he was punched by a stranger when he went to the aid of a woman being attacked outside a nightclub. The attack left him with life-threatening head and



Left: Matt Scarff

Below: The CareFlight International Air Ambulance medi-jet mission arrives in Perth. Photo News Limited.



chest injuries.

After their dash from Darwin, the CareFlight medical team spent three vital hours stabilising the injured man so he could be flown to Perth in a critical condition, on full life support on the CareFlight International Air Ambulance airlift.

Because he was not covered by insurance, Matt's sister and family asked CareFlight to publicise the mission as they turned to social media to successfully raise the funds to offset the cost of the jet flight to Perth, Matt's lengthy stay in intensive care and his recuperation. ✕

## Every cent helps to keep CareFlight in the air

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**Privacy Information:** CareFlight recognises the importance of your privacy and safeguarding your personal information. All precautions are taken to protect your details and we use them to contact you about fundraising, our work, events, merchandise and other issues we feel may be important to you. To change the type and frequency of information you receive call 1800 655 876.

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