

CareFlight news

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CareFlight celebrates 30 years of saving lives



One late summer afternoon in 1986, a small group of volunteers met in a café, their ambition to change the face of Australian aeromedical rescue. Thanks to the dedication, passion and talents of those extraordinary founders, CareFlight is now celebrating 30 years of flying to the rescue of people in need.

It's an amazing story and one everyone in the community can be proud of, because, at its heart, CareFlight exists only to serve our community.

When the idea for CareFlight first emerged, the concept of taking the hospital to the accident scene was new. No civilian service in Australia had done it before. But this group of medical professionals, pilots and aircrew were determined to make it happen.

Director and co-founder Ian Badham said the group worked hard

over five months to source funding and equipment, train crew and figure out the logistics.

The group gave it their all, and in July 1986, CareFlight got off the ground.

With minimal resources, but boundless determination, they completed mission after mission, proving that CareFlight had what it took to deliver a first class medical rescue service.

From the beginning, the group's passion has been to get better, faster and smarter at saving lives. That passion has driven the organisation to set new standards in aeromedical rescue in Australia.

CareFlight has evolved from a single helicopter, daylight-only operation to a 24-hour service that extends to medical research and training.

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CareFlight medical care meets 17-month-old Joseph English

It had been an ordinary day in an ordinary Australian home. Joseph's mother had taken a moment to answer a phone call, while Joseph played with his older brothers. When she returned, Joseph had disappeared. She found his lifeless little body in the family spa.

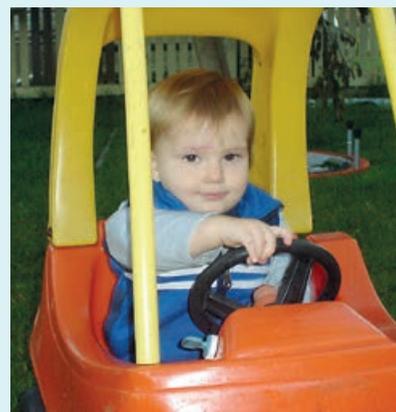
CareFlight was in the air seven minutes after the 000 call. Thirteen minutes later, they landed in the school next to Joseph's house.

Our team treated Joseph immediately and flew him straight to a specialist paediatric hospital, where he spent six days in intensive care.

Joseph is alive and well today thanks to CareFlight and the community behind us.



"Originally, there were only a handful of us: doctors, pilots and rescue crew who had up to 15 years' experience with rescue helicopters. We wanted to turn that into a medical operation, taking a teaching hospital standard of care to the roadside." **Ian Badham BSc, OAM, Director and co-founder**



THREAT course a big hit

CareFlight has launched a new training program specifically designed to deal with casualties resulting from a hostile or dangerous situation. The Tactical and Hostile Response Emergency Access and Treatment (THREAT) program focuses on how to deal with specific injuries after a blast, siege, armed hold-up, shooting, terrorist attack or any hostile or dangerous situation.

Staff from Surf Life Saving NSW, Fire and Rescue NSW and the Parliamentary Security Service (PSS) from Australian Parliament House took

part in two pilot courses. Fireman Glen Whitehead said he wouldn't hesitate to recommend the program.

"Unfortunately with all that's happening in the world, as first responders, there's a very real possibility that we may be responding to casualties as a result of a hostile situation. So we really need to know how to deal with those injuries," he said.

"I feel a lot more confident that I know what to do to stop a major bleed quickly and potentially save someone's life." ✕



MediSim Trauma Care Workshop marks five years

CareFlight has marked five years of its award winning Trauma Care Workshop. Since the launch in Kempsey in 2011, our education team of doctors, paramedics and nurses have travelled to rural and remote areas throughout Australia delivering the unique training to more than 2,500 first responders and volunteers.

These key emergency workers and volunteers are often the first to arrive at the scene of a trauma incident and their decisions can mean the difference between life and death.

The course uses life-like mannequins and a unique car crash rescue simulator to create a high pressure environment, ensuring scenarios are realistic.

Most recently, the education team completed a tour through South Australia. ✕



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A great example of our life-saving training programs, delivered entirely thanks to community fundraising, are the volunteer trauma care workshops (read the latest update on MediSim, above).

The not-for-profit organisation's medical teams have been called to some of the worst disasters in recent history, including the 2004 tsunami in Indonesia.

Closer to home, CareFlight has worked continuously to help improve the system of trauma care for children (see how CareFlight's rapid response rescue service saved Joseph's life, on page one).

Over the decades, CareFlight has flown to thousands of accidents. However the growth of our organisation has not changed our charitable purpose – to save lives, speed

recovery and deliver the best possible service to the community.

It's been an incredible journey. Thanks to the dedication of our founders, the tremendous work of our staff and the steadfast support of the community, every day we are able to share new stories of lives saved. Your commitment to CareFlight gives us the backing we need to do our vital work.

You're the reason we've rescued more than 50,000 people from all corners of our country as well as overseas. Without your help, CareFlight couldn't have made such a difference, not only to our patients, but to the very nature of aeromedical rescue in this country. Please give today, so that CareFlight can keep taking urgent medical care where it's needed most. ✕

Medic-on-the-spot starts treatment after parachute mishap

A last jump of the day left a man suffering serious injuries from a parachute mishap at Batchelor, south of Darwin. The 29-year-old man drifted off course as he came in to land, hitting a tree beside the airstrip near Litchfield National Park.

A Darwin-based army combat medic saw the accident and raced to help at about 6.30 pm before nurses from the town's health clinic arrived.

A doctor and nurse with Darwin's CareFlight TIO rescue helicopter were then alerted to the man's plight. The

CareFlight medical team praised the army medic's quick and expert treatment to the parachutist's shoulder and pelvic injuries.

After stabilisation, the man was flown to Royal Darwin Hospital where he remained in a serious but stable condition on arrival at 7.45 pm. ✕

Man airlifted after a ladder fall in Pretty Beach

A man in his 60s was airlifted to hospital in a serious but stable condition after he fell three metres off a ladder in Pretty Beach.

CareFlight's rapid response helicopter landed at a school near the scene. Paramedics brought the patient to the helicopter where the medical team treated him for head injuries before airlifting him to hospital. ✕



Baby celebrates first birthday as paediatric helicopter service marks 1,000th patient

In May, the CareFlight and NETS (Neonatal and paediatric Emergency Transport Service) teams marked a huge milestone, transporting their 1,000th patient.

Among their patients is one very happy and healthy little boy who reached a milestone of his own in May - his first birthday. But 12 months earlier Jack Embleton's parents Jamie and Katrina didn't know if he'd survive his first week.

"I was three days overdue and I just felt that something wasn't right, so I went to my doctor for a check-up. I was rushed to Bathurst Hospital and two hours later Jack was born via an emergency caesarean section," said Katrina.

A blood condition meant that Jack's

blood wasn't pumping around his tiny body when he was born. He wasn't breathing and had to be resuscitated.

"When we were told that a helicopter was on the way to pick up Jack, we were horrified, but as soon as CareFlight landed, NETS took over and I knew everything would be ok," Katrina said.

Jack was flown to Nepean Hospital where he stayed for a week.

CareFlight and NETS continue to transport critically ill babies and children from right around NSW. So far in 2016, CareFlight has flown 133 patients from various regional hospitals with Canberra, Gosford, Goulburn, Orange and Wollongong the most frequently visited by the CareFlight/NETS teams. ✕

David Chapman thanks CareFlight for saving his life

David Chapman is lucky to be alive after he was flung from his boat at high speed on the Hawkesbury River.

The 22-year-old was found face down and unconscious by people on a nearby boat who dragged him to shore.

CareFlight's rapid response helicopter landed near the river bank and the medical team rushed to treat David. He had serious head and neck injuries and was airlifted in a critical condition to Westmead Hospital.

A few weeks later, David visited pilot Ian Smart, aircrew officer David Gardiner, Dr Geoff Tweedale and paramedic Graeme Holden to thank them all for coming to his aid that evening. ✕



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- Arrange a visit to the CareFlight base or for a speaker to visit your group.

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