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# AirCurrents

CareFlight Air and Mobile Services

FALL 2020



## CareFlight Air and Mobile Services Adds Fourth Aircraft Base in Darke County

By Jennifer Schueler, MSN, APRN, NREMT-P, CEN, Flight Nurse

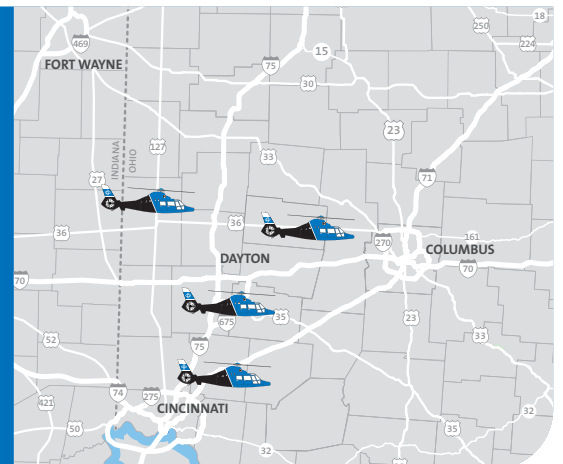
Expansion of CareFlight Air and Mobile Services occurred in March with the addition of a fourth aircraft base. CareFlight 4 is now housed at the Darke County Airport enabling a quicker response to those in the northern Miami Valley. The new base will also expand the 150-mile flight radius service area into Indiana and upper Ohio, and is part of a collaboration with Versailles-based Midmark Corp. The 24-hour staffed Darke County base will house a Dauphin model aircraft capable of transporting two patients, should the need arise. Additionally, each aircraft is staffed with one pilot and two flight nurses. Many of the program's Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) nurses are in the process of transitioning into a flight line, so many familiar faces you

saw on the program's MICU will now be providing the same level of care in a helicopter. Overall, the addition of the fourth aircraft base will expedite the ability of the patient to receive rapid life-saving services and access to Miami Valley Hospital's Level I Trauma Center.



**CareFlight now has four bases of operation:**

Miami Valley Hospital  
Lebanon-Warren County Airport  
Urbana-Grimes Airport  
Darke County Airport





## CareFlight Air and Mobile Services Brings New MICUs On Board

By Jennifer Schueler, MSN, APRN, NREMT-P, CEN, Flight Nurse

March 2020 brought many changes to our world that will undoubtedly remain etched into our memories. While the COVID-19 pandemic within the United States was just starting to ramp up, CareFlight Air and Mobile Services quietly focused on acquiring new Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) vehicles.

American Medical Response (AMR) is the ground medical transportation division of Global Medical Response (GMR) and serves as the vendor for the new vehicles. Each new Ford E-450 MICU vehicle adheres to a rigorous maintenance schedule requiring multi-point inspections that includes an oil change, cabin filter change, and tire rotation every 3,500 to 4,000 driven miles. That service is handled by two designated mechanics at the 30,000-square-foot AMR maintenance facility in Huber Heights. The proximity of that maintenance facility is instrumental in keeping the MICU vehicles mission-ready and within the geographic service area, thus eliminating unnecessary out-of-service time. Two back-up vehicles are available 24/7 as well as an on-duty supervisor. Along with the mechanics, they can obtain information regarding each vehicle via an internal fleet tracking system.

Expediting the preparation of these new vehicles gives credit to a few dedicated and experienced staff members of the CareFlight Air and Mobile Services program. Within a few short weeks they readied each vehicle for a careful inspection by the Ohio Department of Public Safety's (ODPS) Division of Emergency Medical Services. All MICU vehicles passed that inspection with flying colors the first

time around, allowing each MICU to be placed into service in early March.

Aside from ODPS inspection, the MICU also had to meet all standards set forth by the Commission of the Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS). The accrediting body of CAMTS is dedicated to ensuring that each patient will receive quality and safe care within the transport environment no matter if transported by air or a critical care ground unit. All vehicles operated by CareFlight Air and Mobile Services meet the CAMTS requirements.



### MICU vehicles remain at:

Miami Valley Hospital  
Miami Valley Hospital North  
Miami Valley Hospital South  
Miami Valley Hospital  
Jamestown Emergency Center

*The service area of the MICU attempts to limit those assets to serve patients within a 75-mile radius of Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton.*





## CareFlight and COVID-19: Mitigating Risk

By Andrew C. Hawk, MD

Eight or nine months ago, most of us had never heard of the novel coronavirus “2019-nCoV.” Flash forward to the ongoing pandemic. Not a day (or an hour) goes by without COVID-19 being thrust into our lives, both as caregivers and potential victims. As I write this, there have been more than 2 million confirmed COVID-19 cases in the United States, and more than 115,000 deaths – with more expected. Everyone wants to provide excellent medical care. And no one wants to be infected by COVID-19.

According to dictionary.com, the word mitigation means “... to lessen the ... intensity of something unpleasant...” Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic is to the extreme of “something unpleasant.” Mitigating risk is lessening risk – because risk never goes to zero. CareFlight’s risk mitigation specific to COVID-19 began in January. Remember, at that time, there were no reported COVID-19 cases in Ohio. CareFlight confirmed their plan of action to mitigate risk, including utilization of PPE appropriate for a new virus that had potential for airborne transmission.



Mitigating risk requires constant review and adaptation. As more was learned about COVID-19, CareFlight’s risk mitigation evolved. Daily noon conference calls among the CareFlight administrative staff ensured the most up-to-date COVID-19

information was being applied to the entire program to mitigate risk. Four internal clinical documents were created and have become the foundation of CareFlight’s COVID-19 clinical response. These documents address our general approach to the COVID-19 situation, including PPE, clinical care specifics of the COVID-19 patient, helicopter-specific PPE, and transporting the prone patient. These documents mitigate risk. And with constant review, they will be updated as necessary as we learn more and move through this pandemic.

In mid-March, CareFlight transported its first pre-transport confirmed positive COVID-19 patient. Overall, the CareFlight air and MICU program has transported more than 200 possible, probable, presumed, or positive COVID-19 patients. This includes more than 40 pre-transport confirmed positive COVID-19 patients, most on ventilators, with many more patients testing positive post-transport during hospitalization. CareFlight has mitigated risk to transport these high-risk COVID-19 patients. And we will continue to mitigate risk today and in the future, during this pandemic and the next.



**Andy Hawk, MD**  
Medical Director  
CareFlight Air and Mobile Services  
**(937) 208-6633**  
[achawk@premierhealth.com](mailto:achawk@premierhealth.com)



# Premier Health CareFlight Air and Mobile App

By Nick Magoteaux, Premier Health System Transportation Manager

Earlier this year, we were proud to announce that CareFlight Air and Mobile had an app built for our service area's EMS agencies and dispatch centers. This app can help speed up next-level care to any patient in your community.

This app enters your incident directly into CareFlight's Communication Center, allowing for seamless dispatching of our helicopters.

Using the app is easy; you can either search the built-in Google map for your incident or use the GPS on your phone while on scene.

Once you identify the location of the incident, just answer a few simple questions about the incident. Your responses are sent to CareFlight's Communications Center to be dispatched. Once dispatched by CareFlight's Communications Center, you will be able to see in real time which helicopter is coming and their real time ETA. Once your helicopter departs the scene, you'll be able to track them until they arrive at the hospital with the patient.

During inclement weather and air transport is not possible, we are able to utilize the app for MICU transports. The app allows for continued communication, no matter the mode of transport.

## Signing up is easy!

Create your account at **PremierHealth.FlightCall.FlightVector.com** or by downloading the app on your phone. The organization password is a90aca.

### Android or iPhone

Point your phone's camera at the QR codes to connect to the app to download.

Or, search for "CareFlight" on the Apple Store or Google Play Store.



Android



iPhone



Once your account is verified, you'll be able to request a helicopter directly to the scene.

# CareFlight Reunion

By Nancy Bowman

The life-saving efforts of those who came to Steve Keiser's assistance when he went into cardiac arrest leave him practically speechless.

Keiser, 67, was brought back to life three times June 3 after collapsing at his North Star home after suffering chest pains while mowing.

He had the chance this summer to meet the crew from CareFlight who came to his aid following intervention by local first responders.

Although he initially thought the chest pain was due to acid reflux, Keiser soon realized that the situation was more serious.

He walked in the back door, asked wife Angela to call 911 and passed out. The next thing he remembered, Keiser was at Miami Valley Hospital, with his family at his side.

In between, he was tended to by Jared Widener, an off-duty EMT and Vandalia firefighter who lived nearby and started CPR on arrival, and Jim Rismiller, a local firefighter who retrieved an AED. They kept Keiser alive until Ansonia life squad transported him to a CareFlight helicopter waiting at the local fire department.



Photo by Steve Baker, WHIO-TV

Keiser's heart stopped three times and was started again by responders. At the hospital, Keiser received three stents and was on the road to recovery – and an opportunity to thank the responders who had cared for him during that critical trip to the hospital.

The reunions with patients and families often provide clarity for the patient, said Mandy Via, CareFlight outreach coordinator.

The reunion with CareFlight nurses Audrey Wood and Anna Ludewig was their first.

“There were tears everywhere. This gives them the opportunity to fill their cup, gives them a reminder that we take care of patients in critical times and sometimes we can bring them back to the community. That is huge,” Via said of the reunions.

“I can't thank them enough. I don't know what to say,” Keiser said.



## Premier Health's EMS Center of Excellence Offers Distance Learning

By Elizabeth Beam and Joe Burdick, EMS Coordinators

Being responsive to the needs of first responders has always been a mission of Premier Health. The EMS Center of Excellence sought ways to reach out to more EMS providers long before the COVID-19 lockdown. Then everything happened at once. Due to social distancing guidelines from the State of Ohio, we could not visit our frontline friends at the fire houses. However, we knew the need for EMS education was still there. Training is a way of life at

most fire and EMS stations. We hoped by offering some form of education, we could provide a glimpse of normalcy in the midst of a chaotic and stress-filled world. As partners with EMS, Premier Health recognizes that training leads to better outcomes for the patients and better retention of valued EMS personnel.

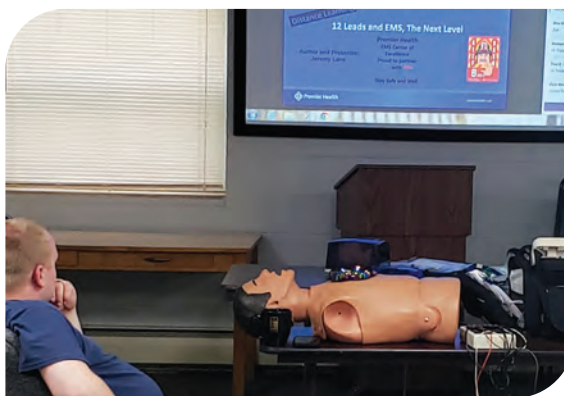
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## Distance Learning (continued)

We started small. Miami Valley Hospital South's trauma medical director, Dr. Alyssa Gans, was willing to teach a sepsis lecture to the Fairborn Fire Department via distance (online) learning – three platoons over three days. It went so well that we added a few more departments to the mix the following week. Then it became apparent that we could bring these classes to just about anyone simultaneously and record it for later viewing for those who might miss it in part or entirely for whatever reason, like responding to a 911 call.

We have continued to grow each week. There are now more than 1,100 people viewing these online continuing education classes (either live or at their convenience). We have brought our training to three times as many people as we did in the same period last year. We are humbled by the range of participants, too. They come from small rural communities and large urban departments, from all over Ohio and at least 6 other states. They are joining together to learn and better prepare for the next call.



We know that the vast majority of caregivers want fewer lectures and more hands-on training. We look forward to the day when it can safely happen. We also anticipate that distance learning will be here long-term to help our continuing education program fulfill its mission.



**To be added to the distance learning email list visit:**  
**[tinyurl.com/Premier-EMS-Signup](http://tinyurl.com/Premier-EMS-Signup)**

*Miami Valley Hospital  
One Wyoming Street  
Dayton, Ohio 45409  
CareFlight  
(800) 251-2273*

*Candy Skidmore  
Vice President Service  
Integration Emergency/  
Trauma/CareFlight*

*Beth Calcidise, RN  
CareFlight and Premier  
Transportation Director*

*Mandy Via, RN  
Outreach Manager*

*Angela Sebald, RN  
Editor*

*Elizabeth Beam  
Nancy Bowman  
Joe Burdick  
Andrew C. Hawk, MD  
Nick Magoteaux  
Jennifer Schueler  
Contributing Writers*

*Kelly Spittler  
Graphic Design*

*Miami Valley  
Hospital Mission  
We will improve the health  
of the communities we  
serve with others who  
share our commitment  
to provide high-quality,  
cost-effective health  
care services.*