

**Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago**  
**Heliport Review Committee**  
**Summary of April 23, 2015 Meeting**

This report summarizes the issues discussed during the April 23, 2015 regular business meeting of the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago Heliport Review Committee. A full list of meeting participants appears at the conclusion of this report. Any questions or comments about the Lurie Children's Heliport and its operations should be directed to Ken Labok, Community Relations Manager, [klabok@luriechildrens.org](mailto:klabok@luriechildrens.org).

- 1. Welcome and Meeting Purpose:** Susan Hayes Gordon, Chair of the Helicopter Review Committee, opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. by welcoming meeting participants and restating the purpose of the Committee.
  - a. The purpose of the Helicopter Review Committee is to provide community review of the Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (H.E.M.S.) at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.
  - b. The Committee will meet quarterly to review H.E.M.S. operations at Lurie Children's in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Institutional Planned Development Number 3.
  
- 2. Introductions:** Susan Hayes Gordon facilitated introductions of participants and reviewed the Committee's meeting materials.
  - a. Roll Call of Committee Members: Susan Hayes Gordon asked all participants to identify themselves. A full list of meeting participants appears at the conclusion of this report.
  - b. Introduction to Materials: Susan Hayes Gordon provided a brief overview of the meeting materials. Each Committee member was emailed the following prior to the meeting and provided with hard copies at the meeting:
    - i. Meeting agenda and supplementary materials; and,
    - ii. Heliport Usage Reports for the months of January, February and March 2015. Heliport Usage Reports are posted publicly and can be found online at: <https://www.luriechildrens.org/en-us/community/community-relations/Pages/lifesaving-heliport-operation.aspx>

**3. Update on Lurie Children's H.E.M.S:** Laura Westley, MSM, RN, C-NPT, Director, Lurie Children's Transport Team

The committee heard updates on Helicopter Emergency Medical Service Operations (H.E.M.S):

- a. A repair was made to the AWOS, the Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) installed on the hospital's rooftop. This System provides real-time data regarding conditions at the rooftop helipad. Data on weather conditions was still accessible to pilots and no flights occurred during the brief time period required for System repairs.
- b. The hospital's mandatory annual Safety Training has been completed by the Lurie Children's Transport Team and all H.E.M.S. flight operations which meet the strict qualifications required to land on Lurie Children's rooftop helipad.

**4. Update on Nationwide Helipad Incidents and Expansion of Helipad Operations in the City of Chicago:** Gillett Salinas, Vice President, Haymarket

- a. As part of its commitment to safe operations, Lurie Children's carefully monitors news about helicopter safety incidents throughout the country. When incidents involve air medical operators, the hospital often receives updates from the American Association of Critical Care Transport (ACCT), a patient advocacy organization, the Illinois Association of Air and Critical Care Transport (IAACCT) and the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS). The Transport Team and community relations support staff also independently monitor the news reports and official reports on incidents from the National Transportation Safety Board.
- b. When national incidents involve air medical operators, they are analyzed and summarized for the Committee.
- c. From January to March, two incidents occurred.
  - i. The first was a crash in St. Louis, Missouri. The pilot was alone in the helicopter when it crashed during a flight to St. Louis University Hospital. No patients, hospital staff members or visitors were involved in the accident. The incident took place on March 6, 2015.
  - ii. The second was a crash near Eufaula, Oklahoma. On the return flight from a patient transport, the pilot expressed his intention to divert the flight due to meteorological conditions. The helicopter was destroyed after impacting trees and terrain during maneuvering. The incident occurred on March 12, 2015.
  - iii. Neither operation would have met the qualifications required to land at Lurie Children's had these flights occurred in Illinois.

- d. Vertiport Chicago is operational and is receiving private flights. However, medical flights in and out of the vertiport are pending further aviation authority approval. Chicago Helicopter Experience, a helicopter tour operation based in the Bridgeport neighborhood, also is operational.

**5. Review of January through March 2015 Heliport Usage Reports:** Ranna Rozenfeld, MD, FAAP, FCCM, Medical Director, Lurie Children's Transport Team and Ken Labok, Manager, Community Relations reviewed Heliport Usage Reports for the reporting period from January to March with the Committee:

- a. Copies of the January, February and March of 2015 Heliport Usage Reports are included as an attachment to this report.
- b. All Lurie Children's Heliport Usage Reports are posted publicly and can be found at: <https://www.luriechildrens.org/en-us/community/community-relations/Pages/lifesaving-heliport-operation.aspx>

**6. Transport Team 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** Sandra Wydra, Founding Member, Lurie Children's Transport Team

- a. Sandra Wydra, a founding member of Lurie Children's Transport Team, shared information about the history and growth of the hospital's critical care transport program.
- b. The program began with six nurses in 1985. It was one of the first dedicated pediatric transport teams in the state.
- c. In the program's first year, there were 559 ground and air transports. At that time, approximately 40% of transports were done by helicopter.
- d. Last year, there were 1,700 ground and air transports. There are now thirty members of the Transport Team including respiratory therapists. Less than 1% of the hospital's critical care transports were made by helicopter.
- e. Lurie Children's critical care transport experts organize an annual conference for nurses from partnering and referring hospitals. The conference is attended by more than 200 health professionals. The goal of the Team's outreach is to educate care providers about the special needs of pediatric patients and to raise the standard of pediatric care throughout the state.

**7. Committee Feedback:**

- a. A question was asked about the average number of training flights to Lurie Children's. The number of pilot training flights peaked when the new hospital opened and are now infrequent. Training flights are only conducted when a new pilot joins a flight program that meets the strict qualifications required to land at Lurie Children's. These training flights are optional.

- b. A question was raised about why Lurie Children's does not fly to and from accident scenes. It is Lurie Children's policy not to participate in scene transports.
- c. A question was raised about the possible reasons that H.E.M.S. transports to Lurie Children's have declined. One reason the Transport Team feels that the need for helicopter emergency medical services has declined is that local hospitals are able to provide a higher level of care and more successfully stabilize pediatric patients. Lurie Children's now has more than 12 partner facilities throughout the suburbs. The Transport Team also has opened an office in Westchester which allows its members to travel more quickly by ground to suburban locations. Weather conditions in the winter also frequently reduce the number of flights that can land at the hospital.
- d. The Committee requested that the Transport Team consider adding the aggregate total number of ground and air critical care transports to the hospital's regular Heliport Usage Reports.

**8. Committee Meeting Schedule:** The Committee's next meeting will be convened via conference call on July 24, 2015. The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m.

**9. Close:** Susan Hayes Gordon, Chair, concluded the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

**10. Meeting Participants:**

- a. Nancy Borders
- b. Sherri Ewing
- c. Dave Kostelansky
- d. Ken Labok
- e. Susan Hayes Gordon
- f. Ranna Rozenfeld
- g. Mike Riordan
- h. Marc Schulman
- i. Gillett Salinas
- j. Laura Westley
- k. John Wilhelm
- l. Sandra Wynda