

LIFTOFF MAGAZINE

#56, JUNE 2020

EAAA'S COVID-19 UPDATE



**INSIGHTS FROM
THE CREW.** P.7

**OUR SUPPORTERS ARE
THE REAL HEROES.** P.8



East Anglian
Air Ambulance

Together we save lives

Registered charity in England
and Wales number 1083876



P. 6



P. 5

CONTENTS.

- Welcome to Lift Off 3
- HEMS mission updates 4
- Insights from the crew 7
- The real heroes 8
- News on future fundraising 10
- Keeping up a socially distanced lottery 11
- Aftercare redeployed 12
- EAAA 'virtual' life and volunteer updates 14
- Meet the team 16
- Dr Pam Chrispin's secondment to help Covid-19 patients 18
- Together we look forward to a brighter future 19

CONTACT US

All correspondence:
EAAA, Hangar E, Gambling Close, Norwich Airport, Norwich, NR6 6EG

General enquiries: 03450 669 999
Website: www.eaaa.org.uk
Email: info@eaaa.org.uk
Lottery: lottery@eaaa.org.uk

Charity Number: 1083876

Editor: Kat Lawson-Phillips
Design: Liam Carter
Print: Blackwell Print
Cover image: Anglia one at the N&N
Credit: CCP Andy Bates



P. 12

WELCOME

to our Covid-19 issue

We would not normally be writing to you again in the form of Lift Off until late July, however this has not been a normal year. We simply couldn't wait that long to share with you some key updates from our frontline crews, an overview of our PPE Emergency Appeal, which has had an absolutely phenomenal response, (see just how much on pages 6 and 7) and to take this opportunity to really thank and celebrate our supporters. I found taking donations for the PPE appeal and speaking to our supporters first-hand a really incredible and motivating experience.

Without you, and your continued support, we wouldn't have been able to react so quickly and expertly adapt our operation to meet the overarching challenges Covid-19 presented to us. Therefore, in this issue, we would like to share with you as much as possible about how your support allowed us to adapt our vital work during the peak of the pandemic to help save lives.

No one could have seen Covid-19 coming and no one could have predicted the part EAAA would play in supporting the NHS, as the hospitals in our region coped with the peak of cases. I'm glad to say that everyone



at EAAA has been working incredibly hard to adapt to the challenges that the outbreak, and the lockdown, brought to our operation – and I couldn't be prouder of the EAAA team, our supporters, and what we have achieved together.

We don't yet know what the future will hold for EAAA and how badly our charity income will be affected long-term, as we are still in a reactive problem-solving mode. We expect it will be November until we have an idea of what the 'new normal' will be and how our charity's strategy and vision will align to this. The one thing we do know, is that we can't do anything without our amazing EAAA community which keeps us airborne and saving lives. No matter what.

Yours faithfully, **Patrick Peal**,
Chief Executive

Patrick G. Peal

HEMS MISSION UPDATES.



ADAPTING TO COVID-19 WHILE DELIVERING A HELICOPTER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE (HEMS) FOR EAST ANGLIA.

As Covid-19 took over our ambulance service and our hospitals, we knew people wouldn't stop having cardiac arrests, medical emergencies, injuries and road traffic collisions. There was still a need for both of our helicopters to keep flying and responding to 999 calls, but we had to adapt very quickly in order to keep our crews safe.

Every aspect of our operation had to be reviewed, trouble-shooted and new procedures put in place to protect our pilots, doctors and paramedics, in order to maintain our normal HEMS service. We would have to assume that every patient we went to could be infected with the virus and take the necessary precautions.

Sourcing and financing large amounts of unbudgeted personal protective equipment (PPE) and making sure that

our crews were trained in wearing and operating in this PPE, was a huge but essential task.

Early on we implemented a 'cold, hot and warm zone' operating procedure whilst at scene. This, alongside the essential PPE required, enabled our crews to work safely in the pre-hospital environment.

COLD The **COLD ZONE** is a safe zone before our crews reach the patient, e.g. outside the patient's house. Our pilots cannot go beyond the cold zone.



WARM The **WARM ZONE** is close to the patient, but not in the same room. Our crews must prepare for treating the patient, and leave most of their equipment here to prevent contamination.



HOT The **HOT ZONE** is with the patient, where the crew need full PPE to work safely.



Our crews now have a lot more to think about while on scene as they must try to limit the contamination of equipment and make sure they have the right level of PPE depending on the situation.

CAN EAAA FLY COVID-19 PATIENTS?

The guidance from Public Health England advised against carrying known or suspected Covid-19 patients by aircraft, so we worked to mitigate against the possibility of doing so.

We focused on utilising the aircraft to get our medical teams to the patients as quickly as possible, and restricted flying patients to hospital where we could by implementing new criteria.

Patients would only be transferred by air if they had no symptoms of Covid-19 and no known history of symptoms, were more than a 45 minute drive from the most appropriate hospital and had extremely time critical medical needs.

These criteria limit any potential contamination of the helicopter and exposure of the pilots to the risk of infection as much as possible, while still being able to provide the best care for our patients, and is being reviewed regularly. If we do have a patient who meets the new criteria, our pilots wear high-protection masks (FFP3

mask) for extra protection. However, in most of these circumstances, the patients are anaesthetised and intubated, so that we can take over and protect their breathing. This greatly reduces the risk from aerosols (droplets) from a patient contaminating the helicopter, as their breathing is controlled by a closed system.

In case this guidance changed, we have been working with our aviation provider, Babcock, to understand our options regarding pilot safety and deep cleaning procedures for the aircraft (which would take up to two days!). A protective screen has already been installed between the cockpit and rest of the aircraft and we are investigating the use of patient isolation pods, which had been used in Italy and Spain for long-distance transfers.

However, at the time of writing, our current approach to restrict the number of patients transferred by air had been working extremely well, enabling us to continue to attend HEMS missions safely.



INTER-HOSPITAL TRANSFERS OF COVID-19 PATIENTS.

In April we began assisting hospitals when they reached capacity treating Covid-19 patients. Our highly experienced critical care teams transferred patients, by road ambulance, to another hospital in the region with beds available in intensive care, providing essential critical care on the move. To make the transfers as swift as possible, we utilised our helicopters to fly our medical teams to the patient and collect them from the destination hospital, when the transfer was completed.

To assist with the maximum number of transfers during daylight hours, we temporarily altered the shift pattern at the Cambridge base. The night team worked 12am to 12pm instead of 7pm till 7am alongside the day team (who work 7am to 7pm) to give us this extra capacity, without taking teams away from HEMS missions.

However, depending on the time of the transfer and availability of the teams around HEMS work, either Cambridge team or the Norwich team could assist with a transfer, of which we had carried out more than 12 at the time of writing.

The transfers themselves were very long and difficult for our teams as well as being logistically very challenging, to deliver and pick up the teams by air whilst balancing HEMS missions. Operating in full PPE (white suits and respirators with no notepads or pockets for their go-to kit), while caring for a very unwell person, with a disease not encountered before, during a long road journey (e.g. from Essex to Cambridge) was extremely challenging. However, these were a much needed and essential service which we were proud to deliver to support the NHS.



INSIGHTS FROM THE CREW.

CHRIS CHADWICK, DOCTOR

"It has been really humbling to see how much our wonderful supporters care about us during this time, with a staggering response to our PPE appeal. I had the great privilege of assisting our incredible fundraising team in speaking to donors as they called to donate. As a user of the PPE your generous donations have helped to fund, I would like to say thank you. Feeling protected in the best equipment available has allowed us to focus on our 'day (and night) job'. Thanks to your ongoing support, we have been able to proudly continue to concentrate on the most serious patients in front of us."



DAVE KILLINGBACK (RIGHT), HEMS PARAMEDIC

"Adjusting to working in PPE has been one of the biggest challenges for me. The PPE we need varies depending on the risk and procedure required, from a simple surgical mask, gloves and apron to full boiler suits, powered air respirator hoods, shoe covers and three pairs of gloves. This can delay us entering the scene of an emergency, however with regular training and practice all crews have got used to the process.

It has also been amazing to see the positive aspects shine through. We have been lucky enough to receive things like Easter eggs, smoothies and energy bars, and sanitizing hand gel made and donated from a gin distillery. The support has been amazing."



THE REAL HEROES, our supporters

Words are really not enough to express how grateful we are for the support we've had in response to our personal protective equipment (PPE) appeal.

In a very short amount of time, together, we raised over £320,000 to keep our crews safe and protected, while they work to support the ambulance service and NHS during the crisis. This has blown us all away at a time when we are facing a huge gap in regular fundraising income.

Our initial target was to raise £100,000, which we estimated would be the unbudgeted PPE cost to keep our crews protected from Covid-19 for six months. However, the reality is that our crews will need this essential PPE for much longer than six months, as they will still be at risk long after the initial peak of Covid-19 has passed.

Thanks to this phenomenal – and wholly unpredicted – amount of support, we now know that we will be able to protect our crews for the foreseeable future. Thank you. We received an incredible amount of online donations (two per minute after



launching the appeal via email) an amazing response via text, a huge amount of post, adding up to 556 cheques and a record-breaking number of phone calls.

An extra special thank you goes to everyone who donated by phone, especially those who persevered and tried multiple times to get through to us, or left us a message to call them back. We experienced an unbelievable number of calls (4440 more calls than the previous month), which took us all by surprise, and meant that we very quickly had to rally an emergency team to keep up – including some of our crew members and our CEO, Patrick, took to the phones.

Everyone who took a phone call absolutely loved the opportunity to get to know our supporters and hear first-hand their love and enthusiasm for the charity and their reasons for supporting EAAA. As a team, we spent over 200 extra hours on the phones during the PPE appeal response, and we would all do it again.

Here are just a few quotes from the conversations we had which really meant a lot to us:

- "I've been saving money on not going out and want to give it to help your crews instead"*
- "I used to fly RAF helicopters and really respect what your teams do to help people"*
- "I already support you every month but want to buy the crew a respirator to help keep them safe. You never know when you might need their help!"*

We have also had a number of generous donations of PPE and food sent to the crew, which has meant an awful lot to them and really made them smile during their long and challenging shifts.

We would like to say the biggest thank you to everyone who has supported us through this difficult time, and to all of our supporters for their historic and future support.

Together, we really do save lives.



A high-protection face mask, which can be worn by medical crew and pilots



Face mask, protective visor and gown



Full PPE, a protective suit and respirator, and lower level PPE, goggles and a lower-protection face mask

Here are some of the items your donations have helped to purchase for the crew

NEWS ON FUTURE FUNDRAISING.

RAFFLE UPDATES

Thank you to everyone who played our Spring raffle, which was drawn on 6 May. We are pleased to say, despite the pandemic, that we had a fantastic response to the Spring raffle, raising over £138,000. The top prize of £3,000 was won by Mr J in Cambridgeshire and Mr S in Suffolk was our super seller!

We have, however, due to the coronavirus decided to postpone our Summer raffle. Instead, the raffle will be back in September with a bigger than ever Winter raffle. To make sure you don't miss out on getting your tickets, you can pre-register for the Winter raffle by visiting eaaa.org.uk/lottery/raffle-pre-register.



EVENTS UPDATES

As you can imagine, EAAA fundraising activities are going to look a little different this year, and maybe even next year, too. We have made the difficult decision to cancel all of our events for 2020, with the health and safety of our patients, staff, volunteers and supporters our main priority. The ongoing need to observe social distancing has meant we are not able to simply postpone these events. Trek 24 and Only The Brave had been due to take place in September and October respectively and we have started issuing refunds. Please look out for these events when they return in 2021!

CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE

look out for this in August

As we have brought this issue of Lift Off forward, you might have noticed that we have not included a Christmas catalogue, which you would normally receive from us in July. We will send you the Christmas catalogue in August, please look out for it then. If you can't wait that long to order your EAAA Christmas cards, please visit our website in late July.

Can you refer a friend?

With our lottery canvassers not currently working due to social distancing measures, we have seen a huge drop in new lottery players signing up. So, we're calling on you to help!

Could you be an EAAA lottery ambassador and refer a friend or family member? They can sign up online at www.eaaa.org.uk/shout, call us on 01603 489400 or search EAAA Lottery online.

1 2 3 4 5 6

KEEPING UP A SOCIALLY-DISTANCED LOTTERY.

Our lottery team dressed up and decorated in celebration of VE Day

We're pleased to say that our lottery, which continues to receive regular support, is still going strong and our lottery team have been working hard during the lockdown to keep the lottery draw going each week – whilst keeping a safe distance from each other.

You may not realise, but the draw takes place in the EAAA Norwich office every Friday, and there must be at least two people present to authenticate the draw. So whilst working from home from Monday to Thursday, the wonderful Tracey and

Sam have been coming in every Friday (or Thursday if it's a bank holiday) and they haven't missed a draw.

During lockdown we have had two Accumulator winners, a prize of £3,500 went to a player in Norfolk right at the start, on the 20 March, and £2,500 went to a player in Suffolk on the 24 April. Thank you to everyone who continues to play our weekly lottery and to everyone who has recently upped their membership to support us even more.

AFTERCARE *redeployed*

As the call went out for nurses across the region to help, EAAA's Aftercare Team responded wholeheartedly. Patient Liaison Officers, Georgie Sellick, Lisa Boyle and Sue Gee, work for EAAA part-time while also working in the region's hospitals and Head of Aftercare and Community Operations, Alison Brett, has had an extensive nursing career.

The first to be asked to return to hospital fulltime was Georgie, who works as a Neuro Critical Care Sister at Addenbrooke's. Lisa took on a three month contract at the West Suffolk Hospital on the Intensive Care Unit. Alison was asked to help set up a Family Support and Liaison team at the London Nightingale Hospital and Sue has been keeping the EAAA Aftercare service going, continuing to support our patients for two days a week, while also working her normal shifts as a Sister on the Coronary Care Unit at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH).

We feel very lucky to have such an incredible team of nurses working for EAAA. Here are some insights from their time working to fight Covid-19.



From the Nightingale Hospital in London, Alison said:

"It was a daunting sight, thousands of cubicle spaces being built and no idea how many patients we were going to support. As it's a field hospital, there is limited infrastructure and the ward staff are unable to communicate with families, hence the need for a family liaison team.

"The work was difficult but rewarding as the families were so grateful to hear from us with (at least) daily updates. We gathered information from relatives so as someone recovered, they could see messages and pictures from family. We also accompanied relatives to visit dying patients, and although distressing, relatives really valued the opportunity to be with their loved one. It was frightening, exciting, and terribly sad at times, but I've been working with some remarkable people with such a 'can do attitude' and have felt, if temporarily, part of a 'different' and very valued team".

From the NNUH and EAAA, Sue said:



"We have been working very hard in Cardiology to ensure we can provide the same level of expert care to all patients during these complex times, including developing a second Coronary Care Unit, so that we can care for those with suspected and confirmed Covid-19. We continue to provide a first-class lifesaving service to our patients. I am also very proud to have been able to continue working for EAAA, supporting these vulnerable patients too."

From West Suffolk, Lisa said:



"I was expecting to be just be a 'spare pair of hands' but it wasn't long until I was back in the thick of it, caring for two level three patients a day. Wearing full PPE for long shifts, working nights and caring for patients who are very unwell has taken its toll on me, but I am doing the very best I can to help and that is very rewarding."

From Addenbrooke's, Georgie said:



"Addenbrooke's massively increased their intensive care capacity to accommodate the rise of seriously ill patients and needed experienced nurses to look after them. It's been a struggle trying to balance the hours with a young family, but one of my favourite moments was the transfer of a recovered patient from the intensive care unit to the ward. He video called his family for the first time and it made all the hard work worthwhile."

EAAA 'VIRTUAL' LIFE, and volunteer updates

The EAAA family has been looking a little different lately. We have sent as many staff, who are not critical to our operation, to work from home as we possibly can. Everyone has been keeping in touch 'virtually' through an internal newsletter called Temperature Check, video calls, weekly clubs, such as EAAA Desert Island Discs, a quiz and yoga class and virtual bring and share, in place of our quarterly staff day in April.



All of these activities are open to the clinical and charity teams and the Desert Island Discs and weekly quiz are proving very popular and helping to keep our staff talking and feeling connected. Which songs, food and luxury item would you take to a desert island? It's a lot harder to choose than you might think!

We have also sadly waved a temporary farewell to 19 staff who have chosen to take voluntary furlough leave, as their work load had temporarily reduced or was not business-critical and by taking voluntary furlough leave they are helping to protect our income at this challenging time. We will welcome these staff back from furlough as soon as we can, as our staff are our most important resource.

As a charity, we are very lucky to have over 350 incredible regular and occasional volunteers spread far and wide across East Anglia who support us in the most amazing ways. From holding talks, charity collections, attending cheque presentations, assisting with CPR training sessions in the community to helping at our events and in the office, our volunteers mean everything to us. It is therefore very challenging not to be able to offer any volunteering opportunities for the foreseeable future, but we are keeping in touch with our volunteers weekly so they are up-to-date with life at EAAA.

In the meantime, we very much enjoy hearing what our furloughed staff and volunteers have been doing during the crisis and have a few updates here to share with you.



Zoe Harris – Community Fundraiser

Zoe has been home schooling her two children and 'braved the shave' on her birthday, raising an incredible £1,116 for EAAA.



Amy Haynes – Community Fundraiser

Amy has been volunteering a couple days a week for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn in their fundraising team, and keeping busy at home (including celebrating VE Day).

Helen Clarke, who volunteers for EAAA in Peterborough, with her mum Debbie, became a mum herself on 18 April, welcoming baby boy Joshua Ray Clarke. Congratulations to Helen, partner Shane and grandma Debbie!

Jenny Mitchell, Supporter Engagement Coordinator, has been looking after her elderly neighbours by doing their shopping.

Julie Edmunds, volunteer from Norwich, has been putting her sewing skills to good use to make much-needed scrubs for the NHS.

Alan and Gill Smith, volunteers from Norfolk, took on a 2.6 fundraising challenge at home to mark the day the London Marathon would have taken place. They completed 26 laps of their house and garden – three-legged race style – raising over £300 for EAAA. And enjoyed two cups of tea and six pieces of cake during the challenge!

And last but not least, **Sheena Ellwood**, volunteer from Bedfordshire, has been working flat-out at her local food bank, which has been overwhelmed with donations.

MEET THE TEAM.

Operations

This is an exceptionally hard working team who juggle all sorts of different tasks and demands to make sure that our crew are safe, happy, equipped, up to date on training, right down to making sure the RRVs are serviced and working properly to juggling the crew rotas.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, this team have been working harder than ever behind the scenes to make sure our crews can do what they're needed to do. We're grateful to have such a fantastic team who really are the backbone of EAAA.



Matthew Jones – Director of Operations

My main focus is long term planning and protecting against the things that might stop us providing the service. Covid-19 has shown how difficult it is to prepare for everything that might happen, but also how important it is that we can adapt and respond to a crisis.



Andy Downes - Head of Service Improvement & Clinical Quality

It has been incredible to see how the clinical and operational teams have adapted to these challenges. We have needed to change our way of working and delivering critical care at the roadside whilst adapting to undertake interhospital transfers. The public support has been amazing.



Richard Hindson – Head of Operations

My job is to look after the crew and make sure they have everything they need to run a successful and safe operation. I've been with the charity six years and have never come up against so many challenges so quickly, but we've all pulled together and made it work and for that I'm very proud of the team, the charity and most of all the crews themselves.



Hollie Bennett – Ops Admin

A big thank you to our supporters who have allowed us to continue our service and keep our teams safe! I'm privileged to support the crew and see the lifesaving work they do, especially during these challenging circumstances.



Elizabeth Taylor – Ops Admin

I provide administrative support to help with the day-to-day operation. While it has been a challenging time, it's been amazing to see the continued motivation of the crews, as well as the overwhelming support to help us keep our medical staff safe and equipped. Thank you.



Alan Ward – Aviation Advisor

I've worked in aviation for 37 years and provide technical advice on all aspects of flying and operating our helicopters. Working in isolation has been difficult but it's been great to see how everyone has been so positive and committed to maintaining our service no matter what comes our way.



Sarah Hayes – Ops Admin

I started three days before Covid-19 hit! It's been a baptism of fire but I am enjoying being part of the team and helping out across both bases, as well as sourcing and obtaining the vital PPE needed for our crews.

DOCTOR PAM CHRISPIN, OUR DEPUTY MEDICAL DIRECTOR, HAS BEEN SECONDED TO HELP ON THE FRONTLINE, FROM HOME, IN A REACTIVE EMERGENCY ROLE FOR NHS ENGLAND.

I've been seconded to NHS England's Critical Care Cell to set up and run a co-ordination centre for the transfer of critically ill Covid-19 patients in the East of England. My experience as an EAAA doctor, as well as with the ambulance service and as a critical care consultant, means that I was uniquely placed in the region to develop this service, and I was delighted to be asked so that I could help during the crisis.



Normally we don't transfer many critically ill patients between hospitals as this is a very complex undertaking, but the huge need for intensive care beds during the pandemic made this necessary. Transfers of seriously ill patients with Covid-19 over long distances can be risky, for the staff transferring them as well as the patient, and requires a huge amount of planning, co-operation between multiple organisations and co-ordination.

helping hospital colleagues understand what a service such as EAAA can now provide, and many of them have been amazed at what the team can achieve in transit – truly intensive care in the sky or on the road.

To date, we have safely undertaken a number of transfers across the region, about 20 of which have required the help of air ambulance colleagues who have added interhospital transfers to their normal caseload. Every day has brought new challenges, including helping intensive care and prehospital physicians understand each other's needs and perspectives to the benefit of all. I have certainly enjoyed

I would like to thank the EAAA teams who have taken on this new and complicated work with their usual degree of enthusiasm, professionalism and skill. They have put themselves in harm's way, day in, day out and I have been pleased to be able to play a small part in helping them to help these patients. I've also enjoyed working from home and taking advantage of our local area for long walks, but I'm looking forward to getting back to the 'day job' and seeing everyone again, instead of just on a computer screen!

TOGETHER WE

look forward to a brighter future



The last few months have been incredibly challenging for everyone and there are still uncertain times ahead. However, we have witnessed several positives, random acts of kindness, words of support and inspirational 'virtual' or 'home-based' fundraising activities, alongside the challenges, which have helped us through.

From everyone at EAAA, we would like to express how incredibly grateful we are to be a part of this organisation and to every single person who supports us, in any way shape or form that they can. Thank you.

Together, we look forward to a brighter future.

Together we save lives.



GET UP AND GO YELLOW! AT HOME THIS JUNE



WWW.EAAA.ORG.UK/YELLOW

We're running our Get Up and Go Yellow campaign with a stay-at-home twist for the whole month of June.

Help to keep our yellow helicopters flying! Wear yellow, eat something yellow, put up yellow decorations, hold a yellow themed online party or challenge with your friends and family!

Donate £2 by texting **YELLOWUP** to 70085*. To donate up to £20, text **YELLOWUP** followed by the amount e.g to give £5 text **YELLOWUP5** to 70085.

With your support, we can help save more lives like Annabel's.

When Annabel was three she suffered a cardiac arrest at her pre-school. She received instant first aid and CPR but needed critical care and air-lifting to Addenbrooke's Hospital to save her life. Here she is 18 months later, fit, well and taking part in Get Up and Go Yellow.



*Texts cost the donation amount plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text **YELLOWUPNOINFO** to 70085.