



Association of Air Ambulances

**Rotor Aircraft Landing Facilities
Light / Medium Aircraft Report**

Dec 2014

Operational Subcommittee

Rotor Aircraft Landing Facilities

Light / Medium Aircraft Dec 2014

Air Ambulance Helicopters form an essential part of the UK's Pre-hospital response to patients suffering life threatening injuries or illness. Definitive care for these patients is often delivered through NHS Primary Care Networks such as Major Trauma, Cardiac, Stroke and Paediatrics.

This report details the provision of Helicopter Landing Sites (HLS) for hospitals across England that are regularly used by Air Ambulances in transporting patients to these Primary Care Networks. It builds upon the report published by the AAA in February 2014 outlining HLS facilities at Major Trauma Centres and incorporates the following criteria in defining the quality of the landing facility:

- Is the HLS located on the hospital grounds or offsite?
- Proximity of the HLS to the Emergency Department and whether staff are able to take the patient directly to the Emergency Department or if there is the requirement for the patient to be offloaded from the air ambulance into a land ambulance and then driven to the Emergency Department by road.
- If the surface of the HLS is grass, meaning that in times of adverse weather use of the HLS may increase risk to staff in its use or even result in the HLS being closed with the hospital losing its ability to receive patients.
- Is the HLS staffed by security / clinical staff to ensure the safe operation during landing / take-off and transfer of patients into the hospital?
- Is the HLS of a suitable size and lit in accordance to regulations to enable air ambulances to land with patients during the hours of darkness. It does not allow for flight restrictions due to planning approvals or qualified staffing levels; this will be reviewed and reported separately.
- Is the route from the HLS suitable screened and covered to maintain patient dignity and the safety of staff due to adverse weather during the transfer from the air ambulance to the Emergency Department.

Across the Primary Care Networks:

- I. Only 3 out of 100 facilities fully meet expectation for speed of delivery of the patient to definitive care, the management of dignity of patients and the safe use of the facility.
- II. 32 of the 100 facilities require patients to be loaded into an ambulance and then conveyed by road to the Emergency Department adding considerably to the time it takes a patient to receive definitive care.
- III. 65 sites need improvements such as covered walkways, being closer to the entrance of the hospital or non-closure of roads resulting in delays delivering the patient.

It is clear that there are significant improvements needed in reception/transfer arrangements to ensure that transfers to/from air ambulance helicopters can be as quick and efficiently as possible. All delays should be reduced where possible and all options considered that improve the efficiency of moving the patient from an air ambulance. Helipads should be considered as critical as land ambulance access.

It is unacceptable and not in keeping with the principle of "Equality of Care" for patients of air ambulances to have reduced access to definitive care, in comparison to a patient arriving on a land ambulance, especially as those individuals are typically in need of time critical care.

This report was written by the Operational Subcommittee of the Association of Air Ambulances. The full underpinning data that supports the above conclusion is available by [clicking here](#).

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Key

- No onsite landing facilities – Secondary Road Transfer needed
- Helipad available in excess of 100 meters or with weaknesses (e.g. grass surface area, obstructions, non-covered walkways)
- Helicopter landing facilities under 100 meters from primary care facility and with suitable facilities (hard standing surfaces, covered walkways and screened areas for patient dignity)

| Hospital Name | Care Networks at Hospital | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|------------------|--------|
| | Adult Trauma | Burns | Cardiac | Paediatric Medical | Paediatric Trauma | Hyperbaric | General Hospital | Stroke |
| Addenbrookes Hospital (Cambridge) | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Alexandra Hospital Redditch | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No |
| Basildon Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Barrow in Furness General | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Bedford South Wing Hospital | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Birmingham Children's Hospital | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Blackpool Victoria | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Boston Pilgrim Primary site Trauma Unit | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Boston Pilgrim Secondary Site Trauma Unit | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Bristol Children's Hospital | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Bristol Royal Infirmary | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Broomfield Hospital (Chelmsford) | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Carlisle General | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Castle Hill Hospital (Hull) | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Cheltenham General Hospital | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| City & Sandwell Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Colchester Hospital | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Coventry Walsgrave MTC | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Darent Valley Hospital (Dartford) | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| Derriford Hospital (Plymouth) | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Dorchester Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Frimley Park Hospital (London) | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| George Elliot Hospital (Nuneaton) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Gloucester Royal Hospital | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Good Hope Hospital (Sutton Coldfield) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Great Ormand Street Hospital (London) | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Great Western Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |

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|--|---------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|------------------|--------|
| | Adult Trauma | Burns | Cardiac | Paediatric Medical | Paediatric Trauma | Hyperbaric | General Hospital | Stroke |
| Great Western Hospital (Swindon) | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Grimsby Princess Diana Hospital | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Harefield Hospital (Middlesex) | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Heart of England Hospital (Sandwell) | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Hereford County Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Hinchingbrooke Hospital (Huntingdon) | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Hull Royal Infirmary | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Ipswich Hospital | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| James Cook University Hospital (Middlesbrough) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| James Paget Hospital (Great Yarmouth) | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| John Radcliffe Hospital (Oxford) | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Kings College London Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Kingsmill Trauma Unit (Mansfield) | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Lancaster General | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Lincoln County Trauma Unit | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Lister Hospital (Stevenage) | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Luton & Dunstable | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Medway Maritime Hospital (Gillingham) | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Milton Keynes General Hospital | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Musgrove Hospital (Taunton) | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Newcastle Upon Tyne Royal Victoria Infirmary | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | yes |
| New Cross Hospital (Wolverhampton) | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Norfolk & Norwich Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| North Devon District Hospital (Barnstaple) | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| North Hampshire Hospital (Basingstoke) | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| North Tees General (Stockton on Tees) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Nottingham QMC MTC | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Papworth Hospital (Cambridge) | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Peterborough City Hospital | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Princess Alexandra Hospital (Harlow) | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Princess Royal Telford Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Queen Alexandra Hospital – (Portsmouth) | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |

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| Hospital Name | Care Networks at Hospital | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|------------------|--------|
| | Adult Trauma | Burns | Cardiac | Paediatric Medical | Paediatric Trauma | Hyperbaric | General Hospital | Stroke |
| Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Kings Lynn) | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Queens Hospital Romford London | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Royal Berkshire Hospital (Reading) | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Royal Bournemouth Hospital | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Royal Derby Trauma Unit | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Royal Free Hospital (London) | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Royal London Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Royal Preston | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Royal United Hospital Bath | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Rugby St Cross Hospital | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Russells Hall Hospital Dudley | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Salisbury District Hospital | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Scunthorpe Hospital | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Sheffield Northern General Hospital MTC | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Sheffiled Childrens Hospital MTC | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Shrewsbury Royal Hospital | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No |
| Southend Hospital (Essex) | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Southmead Hospital (Bristol) | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| St Georges Hospital London | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| St Marys Hospital, Isle Of Wight – TU | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Stafford Hospital | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Stoke Mandeville Hospital (Aylesbury) | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Torbay Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Treliske Hospital (Truro) | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| University Hospital Birmingham | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| University Hospital Coventry Warwickshire | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| University Hospital North Staffs | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| University Hospital Southampton | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Walsall Manor Hospital | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Wansbeck General (Ashington) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Warwick Hospital | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |

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|---|---------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|------------------|--------|
| | Adult Trauma | Burns | Cardiac | Paediatric Medical | Paediatric Trauma | Hyperbaric | General Hospital | Stroke |
| Watford General Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| West Suffolk Hospital (Bury St Edmunds) | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Weston General Hospital (Weston super Mare) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Wexham Park Hospital – TU | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Whitehaven General (West Cumberland) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Whipps Cross Hospital (London) | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Worcester Royal Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Wycombe General Hospital (High Wycombe) | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Yeovil Hospital | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |

Conclusion

1. 3 out of 100 facilities meet expectation
2. 65 sites need improvement involving:
 - i. moving closer to entrances
 - ii. screening for dignity
 - iii. covering to protect from weather
 - iv. operation at night
3. 32 sites are inadequate and require:
 - i. Moving to the hospital grounds near to the treatment area.
 - ii. All those detailed in point 2 above.