Essex & Herts Air Ambulance steps up protection against COVID-19

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Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) is taking additional steps to protect patients and crew members from COVID-19 by decontaminating crews and equipment with specially-prepared water containing salt and electricity which instantly kills 99.99% of bacteria, fungi and viruses.

A dry `fog' created from electrolysed saline water is released inside a tent into which anything that needs treating is placed. The environmentally-friendly system is non-toxic, non-corrosive and leaves no harmful residues. Electrolysed water is not new technology. It is used in the food industry and for water treatment.

EHAAT's crews are using the fogging system at the end of every shift, and after every mission. It is in use at the charity's airbases at North Weald and Earls Colne.

Stuart Elms, Clinical Director at EHAAT, said: "I'm delighted that we can add this extra layer of decontamination to our already strong measures of infection prevention and control. We will continue to look for ways to increase the safety of our patients and crews."

The charity is working hard to keep patients, staff, volunteers and supporters safe and has been working with the East of England NHS Ambulance Trust to ensure EHAAT's frontline patient-facing staff are all vaccinated against the virus.

Since 4th January EHAAT has been assisting with the transfer of some COVID-19 patients between hospitals, whilst continuing to respond to the charity's normal workload of medical emergencies, cardiac arrests, road traffic collisions, serious injuries etc

When required, the team based at the charity's North Weald Airbase travel by helicopter or Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) to the relevant hospital, and accompany the patient in a designated land ambulance to the receiving hospital. The EHAAT team is able to provide the advanced level of care that allows a safe transfer of this group of patients.

-ENDS-

Photographs: Fogging equipment in use by EHAAT

For more information contact Gavin Sherriff, PR Officer, on 0345 2417 690 or 07870 158 309

Notes to Editor:

- Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) is a Charity that provides a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for the critically ill and injured of Essex, Hertfordshire and the surrounding areas.
- The service is provided free of charge but, unlike NHS emergency services, the Charity receives limited direct funding from the Government and none from the National Lottery. It costs in excess of £750,000 every month to keep the service operational and cover all charitable costs, and this would not be possible without the generosity and goodwill of people and businesses of Essex, Hertfordshire and beyond.
- Each of the Charity's HEMS teams consist of two Pilots, a Pre-hospital Care Doctor and a Critical Care Paramedic.
- These teams, made up of highly-skilled individuals, attended 1,626 patients in 2020 and are the backbone of your local life-saving Charity.
- The fleet consists of two Air Ambulances, and four rapid response vehicles (RRVs - cars) The

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RRVs are crewed by a Pre-hospital Care Doctor and a Critical Care Paramedic and carry the same life-saving equipment as the helicopters.

- During the day, from 7am until 8.00pm, the Critical Care Team provides the service using helicopters based at Earls Colne and North Weald. An RRV is used before sunrise, after sunset or when the helicopter is unable to fly because of poor weather or maintenance.
- Overnight from 7.30pm to 7.30am the service is provided using an RRV based at North Weald.

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