

Knife crime discussed at Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Aeromedical Conference

Friday 28 June, 2019

28th
June 2019

Impact of knife crime discussed at 10th anniversary Aeromedical Conference

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance's (EHAAT) 10th anniversary Aeromedical Conference on June 26th heard TV presenter Alex Beresford speak movingly about the impact of knife crime on society. Alex's cousin Nathaniel Armstrong was tragically killed during a knife attack earlier this year.

The Good Morning Britain weather presenter and anti-knife crime campaigner spoke about the impact of knife crime on his own family and discussed ways of tackling the issue.

Days before his cousin was attacked, Alex intervened during a knife crime debate on Good Morning Britain arguing that building more prisons was not the way to tackle the epidemic. Since then he has investigated the subject further in a documentary titled 'Knife Crime and Me', in which he spoke to gang members, others who carry knives and those who have not followed a life of crime.

Keynote speaker for the day was Assistant Commissioner Graham Ellis, Head of Operational Resilience and Special Operations Group at London Fire Brigade (LFB). Mr Ellis undertook the Gold Commander role for LFB during several terror attacks on London in 2017.

The conference, held at Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford, brought together over 300 medical specialists and staff from emergency services to discuss aspects of pre-hospital medicine. The theme for the day was 'Reflect, Learn, Innovate'.

Delegates were welcomed to the event, which was sponsored by Specialist Aviation Services, Leonardo Helicopters, MDS Civil Engineering and Anglia Ruskin University, by Dr Ruth Jackson, the Pro Vice Chancellor for the School of Medicine Development at Anglia Ruskin University, EHAAT CEO Jane Gurney and Dr Ronan Fenton, Medical Director of EHAAT.

Duncan Bew, Consultant Trauma and Acute Care Surgeon at King's College Hospital, looked at the causes of knife crime. Dr Matt O'Meara, Pre-hospital Care Consultant at EHAAT and Dr Phil Cowburn, Medical Director of Great Western Air Ambulance, alongside Critical Care Paramedics Charli Watkins and Dee Gordon, each shared lessons learned from challenging cases. Critical Care Paramedics Sam Immens and Elisabeth Hanrahan of the New South Wales Ambulance Rescue Service discussed a mission which saw them treating a patient trapped in a deep hole in a remote area of the Outback.

There were also presentations from Home Office Registered Forensic Pathologist Dr Ben Swift and San Diego-based Flight Paramedic Phil Grieve, who was EHAAT's first Clinical Director.

Ben Myer, Conference Lead and Clinical Manager at EHAAT said: "It's been great to see so many colleagues come together to share knowledge and best practice on a range of subjects. Once again we attracted a group of high quality thought-provoking speakers and thank them for their openness and honesty. We hope that everyone who attended left having learnt something and will consider the points and themes discussed and apply that learning to their roles.

"The feedback we have had from delegates has been really positive, and we will continue to learn and improve the event going forward."

-ENDS-

Photograph: Speakers Ben Swift (L) and Alex Beresford (R) with EHAAT CEO Jane Gurney

For more information please contact Gavin Sherriff, PR Officer, on 0345 2417 690.

Notes to Editor:

- Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) is a Charity that provides a Helicopter Emergency

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Medical Services (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 no direct funding from the Government or 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, tended to 1,491 patients in 2018 and are the backbone of your local life-saving Charity.
- The fleet, consisting of two Air Ambulances, and four Rapid Response Vehicles (RRVs - cars) operates seven days a week from 7am to 9pm. After sunset, the Critical Care Team continues to provide the service using Rapid Response Vehicles. These vehicles carry the same life-saving equipment as the helicopters.
- In addition, a Rapid Response Vehicle is operational on a Friday and Saturday evening from 6pm until 7am with a Pre-hospital Care Doctor and Critical Care Paramedic. This means the Charity's Critical Care Teams are available continuously from 7am on Friday through until 9pm on Sunday.

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