

How to Choose An Air Ambulance Company



17 Educational Facts About Air Ambulance Companies



FREE guide for travelers, medical and travel professionals
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Choosing for Life

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Did You Know?

Currently there are no mandatory regulations for air ambulance providers. The Commission of Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS) and European Aeromedical Institute (EURAMI) are the two most recognized accrediting bodies that offer a voluntary evaluation of compliance with accreditation standards, which demonstrate the ability to deliver service of a specific quality. By participating in the voluntary accreditation process, services can verify their adherence to quality accreditation standards to themselves, their peers, medical professionals and to the general public. Here are 16 questions to ask an air ambulance company before making your selection.

Is the air ambulance service licensed?

AirMed holds a current Air Carrier Operating Certificate in accordance with Federal Aviation Regulations which are in compliance with the Federal Aviation Administration regulations. AirMed also is in compliance with licensure requirements to complete transports in all 50 of the United States.

Does the Air Ambulance service carry aircraft liability insurance and medical malpractice?

AirMed provides the recommended amount of aircraft liability insurance which is \$20 million for jets as well as professional liability in the amount of \$15 million. We also provide a level of medical malpractice insurance that exceeds the recommended standards.

Are they willing to provide proof of insurance?

Proof of liability and medical malpractice insurance is readily available upon the request of the customer.

Does any agency regulate the air ambulance industry nationwide?

The air ambulance industry has a voluntary accreditation process through the Commission of Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS). AirMed holds accreditation from CAMTS as well as the European Aeromedical Institute (EURAMI) proving our dedication to providing the highest standards of quality patient care in the transport environment.

Is the actual air ambulance an operator or a broker?

AirMed is an aircraft operator in which we own and operate the aircraft as well as employ the medical staffing for the missions in which we are contacted to provide. AirMed holds a current Air Carrier Certificate with approved air ambulance operations specifications in accordance to Federal Aviation Regulations regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration.

How can the broker's price be less than a dedicated provider?

AirMed prides itself on having the highest standards of care in regards to medical staffing, medical equipment, aircraft liability and malpractice insurance. When looking at the price difference of brokers and operators, consider the quality of care for which you are paying.

What is the expertise of the air ambulance service?

AirMed has provided care to the ill and injured for three decades. With the number of missions reaching over 18,000 to more than 150 destinations, proves the level of commitment that AirMed has to the Air Medical industry. Our fleet is used exclusively for air medical transport so that we provide the safest, highest quality of care to our clients in their time of need.

Does the air ambulance service employ a Medical Director?

AirMed has a Medical Director that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days per year. The medical crews function under the direction of verbal, written and standing protocols. If medical direction is needed during a flight, the physician is available by satellite phone capabilities. Our Medical Director(s) are trained in Critical Care with emphasis in transport medicine and altitude physiology.

Medical Training Requirements

Physicians should be board certified/eligible in Emergency Medicine or a specialty required by the patient, must be experienced the age-specific patient population i.e., neonatal, pediatric, adult health;

Registered Nurses (RN) must have Critical Care and or Emergency experience and must hold certifications and be experienced in age-specific populations;

Respiratory Therapist (RT) must have two years critical care experience and must hold certifications and be experienced in age-specific populations.

EMT-Paramedic (EMT-P) must have two years critical care experience and must be licensed, certified, or permitted according to the appropriate state regulations and has current re-licensing, re-certification, or re-permitting status.

What are the training requirements for the air medical transport team?

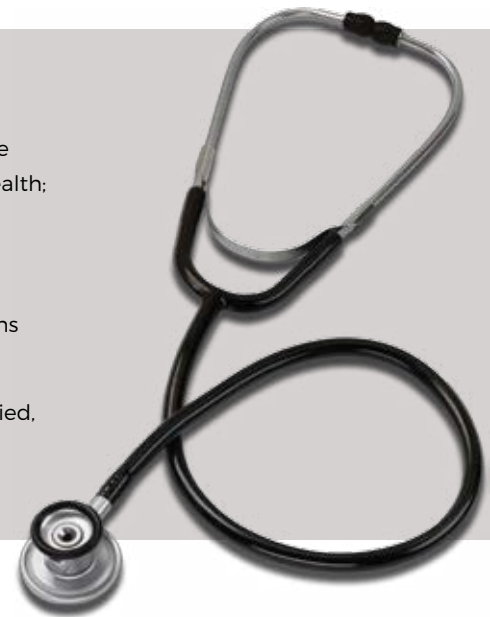
AirMed's medical staff must hold licensure appropriate to the job in which they function (MD, CRNP, RN, RT, and EMT-P). All staff must also hold current certifications in Advanced Life Support appropriate to specific age categories (ACLS, PALS, and NRP), Trauma specific certifications (TNCC, TNATC) as well as Specialty certifications such as CCRN, CFRN and FP-C. Quarterly training is provided to keep the crews up to date on advanced airway management, Crew resource management, aircraft safety training and altitude physiology.

Will the air ambulance service provide bedside-to-bedside care?

AirMed desires to transport a patient bedside-to-bedside. There are instances in which that is not an available option. In these cases, the care that the patient receives once they are released from the care of the AirMed team should not be less than that provided by our medical crews. Our goal is to provide the patient with a continuum of care that meets the highest standards by which we operate.

What are the costs of an air ambulance?

AirMed makes every effort to make sure that a mission is performed in the most efficient manner. By having our own FAA flight dispatchers located in our corporate office, we are able to perform flight planning in the most safe and efficient manner. Costs will vary depending on: type of aircraft, mileage, flight dispatching cost, medical staff required by the patient medical supplies, and ground ambulance charges. International and long-range domestic transports may be subject to additional costs such as: foreign ground handling fees and taxes, overseas air traffic control charges, over flight permits, crew overnight expenses, and relief pilot positioning via commercial airlines.



Does the air ambulance service provide the required equipment and medications to conduct critical care transports?

AirMed adheres to the standards and requirements set forth by the FAA as well as our accrediting agencies. Furthermore, the Medical team of AirMed sets standard equipment requirements on every aircraft so that care of the most critical patient is able to be carried out without delay.

For domestic, North American and Caribbean transports:

- ♥ One FAA approved stretcher and base for each patient
- ♥ A medical Oxygen system with the capacity to transport a ventilator dependent patient from the transport origin to the destination, including fuel stops, while maintaining a 25% reserve without service or refilling
- ♥ 2 - 115 vac/60hz electrical outlets
- ♥ 50 psi air compressor
- ♥ Vacuum pump with adequate suction for one suction canister

For South America, North Atlantic and Pacific transports:

- ♥ One FAA approved stretcher and base for each patient
- ♥ A medical Oxygen system with the capacity to transport a ventilator dependent patient from the transport origin to the destination, including fuel stops, while maintaining a 25% reserve without service or refilling
- ♥ Dual electrical inverters with 6-115 vac/60hz electrical outlets
- ♥ Dual 50 psi air compressor
- ♥ 2 Vacuum pumps with adequate suction for one suction canister

The medical oxygen range of the aircraft is especially important on long distance transports and the highest priority on over the ocean flights. Medical oxygen is not always available in foreign locations, or due to different standard connection fittings, may not be compatible with U.S. equipment.

International medical aircraft should have an un-replenished oxygen supply on board to safely transport a ventilator dependent patient the entire transport, including fuel stops, and have a 25% reserve in case of unexpected delays. This standard can require 40-60 hours of medical oxygen to be available on the aircraft. A suctioning device should be part of the aircraft medical equipment as well as a portable device for use during the ground ambulance portion of the transport.

All needed fluids and medications required by the patient during the transport are provided, to include adequate surplus to accommodate potential flight delays. Fluids are administered during the flight with the use of flight approved intravenous pumps to avoid fluid boluses that may result at altitude with physiological gas changes.

Will the proper aircraft be utilized and can the aircraft safely accommodate the patient?

AirMed's Clinical Coordination team, flight and medical staff determine the safest and appropriate aircraft to be used for a mission. All aircraft utilized by AirMed are equipped to provide the same level of care whether it is for 500 miles or 10,000 miles.

Is complete medical equipment provided during the transport?

All AirMed aircraft are equipped with the equipment to care for a patient from the time patient care is assumed until care is transferred at the patient's destination. Back-up equipment is available in the case of equipment failure. Diversion plans are in place around the world in the case that a patient's status changes, requiring additional resources.

Does the aircraft configuration allow for safe loading and unloading of the patient without excessive maneuvering and allow access to the patient by the med team during flight?

All AirMed aircraft are configured so that patient loading and unloading can be performed without the need to excessively maneuver the patient. The placement of the patient on the aircraft provides constant access and monitoring capabilities by the medical crews.

Can definitive airway measures be performed without delay or constraints during flight?

AirMed's aircraft are configured so that the patient's safety and health are the priority. Medical crews have continuous access to the patient so that Advanced Life Support and procedures can be carried out, without delay.

What documentation with the transport should you expect to receive?

AirMed's Medical Communication Center is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year. Our representatives are able to provide real-time updates to the client. From the initial itinerary for the mission to the status reports provided during the flight the customer is provided timely and transparent information from our Communication Center representatives. Once a transport is completed, the medical record will be available to the client within a timely manner if requested and accompanied by the appropriate authorization. We maintain compliance with HIPPA guidelines and the client's privacy is at the forefront of concern for us.