

AIR LINK

REGIONAL WEST

UPDATES



WHEN TO CALL. HOW TO CALL. WHY YOU CALL.

Air Link, Respond!

Micki Votruba, RN, BSN, CFRN

The radio “tones” go off. “Attention Air Link rotor wing flight team, attention Air Link rotor wing flight team IN AIR STANDBY trauma – MVC north on highway 71.” – “Med crew copies times two.”

A check of the weather and we are off. But, how do we get to that point? It is easy on our end, cut and dry...when the tones go off, we head for the aircraft. On the other hand, the agencies calling for us have more decisions to make before deciding to pick up the phone and request an aircraft. In this quarter’s Air Link Updates, I would like to talk about how you decide when to call and what level of response is best for your situation. Also, now that we service two aircraft, we will talk about some of those differences as well.

Let me start by saying that if you think there is even a chance you will need air medical transport please, call our dispatch. They are knowledgeable and helpful and can guide you through what you need to do to make your request. Early activation is the key to a fast response from us – the sooner we know, the sooner we go. Another thing that our dispatch can help with is deciding which aircraft to dispatch. As I am sure you know, the helicopter can sometimes be very weather-limited and the fixed wing can be markedly better for longer distance. Please, be open to using both aircraft as they each serve an equal and necessary purpose and one can definitely be better than the other, based on individual circumstances. Most importantly, aircraft shopping is dangerous and I would encourage all of you to watch this powerful video produced by Nebraska Association of Air Medical Services (NEAAMS) featuring flight programs across the state with the help of our very own flight paramedic, Robby Rhembrandt: <https://youtu.be/sZ3bUB8Qv6M>.

Dates to remember!

NEAAMS Safety Symposium – June 15, 2020
Regional West Medical Center, 8 a.m.

Air Link Conference – October 17, 2020
Regional West Medical Center, 8 a.m.

Both are FREE all-day conferences with CEUs, lunch, and lots of fresh new topics and speakers!



What Level of Response Do I Ask For???

We need to know patient information and the receiving destination in order to prepare to take a flight. Often, weather is a factor and calling dispatch can help you decide where a patient can be transferred. We have three different response levels that will be outlined here to help you better understand our process.

Ground Standby

Crew reports to the aircraft. Weather is checked. Aircraft is moved out of the hangar but we wait to lift until the sending facility calls Air Link Dispatch and tells them to have us respond. This is a useful level if you are not sure if the patient will need air medical transport or where you are sending your patient, but you know you want them transferred.

In Air Standby

When an In Air Standby is requested, the aircraft will lift and proceed to the location of the requester and await further instructions. This decreases the time of response and subsequently the time it takes to get a patient to definitive care. In the event that the requesting agency/facility determines that air medical transport is not needed, the aircraft will turn around and return to base. If the determination is that the aircraft is needed, then a request for a respond will be initiated by the requesting agency/facility and the aircraft will continue to the requester’s location. There is no charge if it is deemed that the aircraft is not needed. Examples of when an

In Air Standby is appropriate: an ambulance crew or law enforcement may activate based on mechanism of an MVC or trauma scene; a hospital may activate based on an EMS radio report indicative of an MI or stroke but upon assessment at the facility the patient is deemed more appropriate for ground transport.

Respond

Crew reports to the aircraft and, after making sure weather is clear, lifts for the sending facility and lands without any further instruction.

Of note: A receiving facility for your patient is not necessary for us to respond but we do have to have a destination with a bed assignment in order to leave your facility with the patient. All that we need to lift is a general idea of where you need the patient to go so that we can check the weather in that area. For example, the front range of Colorado versus western South Dakota. Regional West is our local trauma center and is equipped to accept all levels of traumatic injuries. With one phone call to Regional West, simply say “I have a trauma patient to transfer.” Your call will be immediately directed to an Emergency Department physician that will accept the patient.

Education

As always, we are happy to provide further information if you have questions. Do not hesitate to reach out!