

Transport team provides expanded services out of AMH

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ALTON - Since the **St. Louis Children's critical care transport team** made **Alton Memorial Hospital** one of its three home bases in 2014, it has been providing children in southern Illinois with a more direct route to highly specialized and life-saving care when needed.

Transport teams comprised of two registered nurses, a paramedic and -- when needed -- a pilot are ready 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to transport the most critical children and infants to specialized care at St. Louis Children's Hospital. The teams transport patients by mobile intensive care unit, helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft.

Since July 1, 2015, Alton Memorial Hospital is serving as home base for KidsFlight 2, one of two helicopters available to the transport teams. In addition, the St. Louis Children's critical care transport team has become one of the first pediatric hospitals in the country — and the first in Missouri and Illinois — to offer scene response — the capability of sending via helicopter a transport team directly to the site of an accident involving children.

“It has been great to have Alton as a location for a transport team,” says Jason Hesman, EMS manager for St. Louis Children's. “Now that KidsFlight 2 is based in Alton, the transport team will no longer have to wait for the arrival of a helicopter from off site. It will make the response time even better for the team and ultimately for the patient.”

With the advent of pediatric scene response, when a 911 call has been made and if it meets the criteria for a scene response, the transport team will go directly to the site.

“It is so important that care can be provided during that ‘golden hour,’ or within the first 60 minutes following a trauma,” Hesman says. “This can make a difference in the outcomes for a pediatric patient when they can have the clinical excellence of the transport team and the highest level of care waiting for them at St. Louis Children's Hospital.”

As chief of EMS at Alton Memorial Hospital, Jason Bowman believes scene response is very important to pediatric patients across the entire region.

“It has already been a big plus for Alton Memorial Hospital and surrounding hospitals to have a pediatric transport team this close, but to now know that they can be called to the scene when needed is a benefit for everyone,” he says.

To ensure they are ready, the Alton EMS team and the St. Louis Children's critical care transport team have already conducted a simulation with a pediatric patient involved in four-wheeler ATV accident at the BMX Park located in Brighton, Ill.

“These types of simulations are important to everyone so they are ready when the time comes,” Bowman says.