

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**HELIJET AND BC EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES FLY SANTA  
TO FIVE BC HOSPITALS IN ONE DAY – BRINGING CHILDREN  
PRESENTS AND CHRISTMAS CHEER**

**Richmond, B.C.** - Boys and girls in pediatric wards at five hospitals got an early visit from Santa Claus today, as Helijet and BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) flew the jolly old elf around the southern BC Coast to bring the young patients presents and Christmas cheer.

In addition to his annual visits to BC Children's Hospital, Royal Columbian Hospital and Victoria General Hospital, two new stops at hospitals in Nanaimo and Surrey were added this year. Santa and one of his elves were accompanied on the flights by Helijet President and CEO Danny Sitnam and Robert Wand, a Critical Care Paramedic with BCEHS.

"We all know Santa's reindeer can get him around the world in one night, but since they're resting up for their big run, we're glad to step in each year and press the BC Emergency Health Services Helijet into service to help Santa make some early rounds to these kids," said Sitnam. "All year long, our dedicated Helijet staff works closely with BCEHS paramedics to provide 24/7 helicopter service for hundreds of critically ill patients across B.C. Many of our patients are children, so all of us at Helijet are happy to help make the Christmas season special for these courageous kids and their parents."

For the paramedics and flight crews who transport children during medical emergencies, the hospital visits with Santa are a unique opportunity to interact with the children in a much happier environment.

"When I meet these children they are often dealing with serious medical emergencies," said Wand. "Bringing them joy and seeing the excitement on their faces when they meet Santa, that's something I really treasure and carry with me throughout the year."

Santa's day-long trek began with visits at Victoria General Hospital and Nanaimo Regional General Hospital in the morning, followed by afternoon trips to BC Children's Hospital (the province's largest hospital for children and adolescents), Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster, and the newly expanded Surrey Memorial Hospital.

The chance to meet Santa and receive an early Christmas gift was a welcome distraction for the young patients, many of whom won't be able to be home for the holidays this year.

**Helijet International** is a Canadian-owned company and North America's largest scheduled helicopter service carrying well over two million passengers in the past 28 years. In addition to its scheduled helicopter services, Helijet is a major service provider of dedicated medically equipped helicopters to the BC Air Ambulance Service of British Columbia. Helijet provides exclusive use helicopter and business jet services to world renowned Sport Fishing Resorts, public service and energy companies throughout the West Coast of British Columbia and Pacific North West. [www.helijet.com](http://www.helijet.com)

**BCEHS** governs the emergency medical services system in B.C. and provide residents, visitors and health care professionals with pre-hospital emergency and inter-facility patient transfer services. BCEHS oversees the BC Ambulance Service and the BC Patient Transfer Network and is supported by the Provincial Health Services Authority. For more information please visit [www.bcas.ca](http://www.bcas.ca).

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