

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Santa spreads holiday cheer to children in hospitals with help from BC Emergency Health Services and Helijet

VANCOUVER, B.C. – Today children spending the holiday season in hospital are welcoming a surprise visit from Santa Claus just four days before his busiest day of the year, thanks to BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) and Helijet.

Santa, along with his trusted elf and BCEHS Infant Transport Team paramedic George Madden are traveling in an air ambulance to deliver presents and spread Christmas joy to boys and girls in Victoria, Nanaimo, Surrey, New Westminster and Vancouver hospitals.

“We’re thrilled to once again assist Santa on his air ambulance toy run to visit children in hospitals this holiday season,” said Helijet President and CEO Danny Sitnam. “Throughout the year our dedicated Helijet staff works closely with BCEHS paramedics to provide 24/7 helicopter service for hundreds of critically-ill patients across BC. Many of our patients are children, so all of us at Helijet are happy to help make this Christmas season special for these courageous kids and their families.”

For paramedics and flight crews, who often meet patients and their families during medical emergencies, the annual toy run is a special opportunity to interact with children and their families in a much happier environment.

“In our line of work, you see on a daily basis the tough realities our patients and their families face when dealing with health-related challenges,” said Madden. “That is why it is so special to me to be a part of this initiative which allows me to see the pure joy and excitement on these children’s faces when they meet Santa.”

Santa’s day-long trek begins with visits to 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 Surrey Memorial Hospital.

Helijet International is a Canadian-owned company and North America’s largest scheduled helicopter service carrying well over two million passengers in the past 30 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

BCEHS is responsible for the delivery and governance of pre-hospital emergency medical care and inter-facility patient transfer services through the BC Ambulance Service and the BC Patient Transfer Network. BCEHS is supported by the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA). For more information, please visit www.bcehs.ca or follow us on Twitter @BC_EHS.

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