

Out of scope

From: Carleine Receveur <Carleine.Receveur@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 14 September 2020 12:37 pm
To: Jon Gaupset <Jon.Gaupset@health.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Airport closures & effects upon regional & national aeromedical retrieval services

FYI

From: Alex Psirides [CCDHB] <Alex.Psirides@ccdhb.org.nz>
Sent: Friday, 4 September 2020 7:30 pm
To: Carleine Receveur <Carleine.Receveur@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Andy Simpson <Andrew.Simpson@health.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Airport closures & effects upon regional & national aeromedical retrieval services

Kia ora both,

Thanks for your reply. The hospital executive were made aware prior to notifying you both; John Tait - CCDHB CMO - asked I notify the MoH.

He also gave me permission to write a letter of support to the Kapiti mayor, which I have done. This was subsequently sent to the media & reported in Stuff.

I hadn't notified Russell, but will now do so. Thank you for suggesting him.

I'm otherwise out of advocacy options but will let you know if anything comes back.

Thanks

Alex

On 4/09/2020, at 17:19, Carleine Receveur <Carleine.Receveur@health.govt.nz> wrote:

Kia ora Alex

Thank you for your email on 27 August where you informed Andrew Simpson and myself over the planned run-way closures at Wellington airport and the subsequent impact on the aeromedical services. Andy and I appreciate the concerns you have raised and the contingency planning and coordination across the DHBs that you have put in place. We were not sure if you had escalated this to your senior DHB executives and would recommend this in the first instance. Due to the regional / national impacts you may also want to consider informing Russell Simpson as the lead DHB CE for Ambulance. We would appreciate if you could keep NASO informed of any updates in light of the potential impact on Emergency Ambulance services.

Ngā mihi

Carleine Receveur and on behalf of Andrew Simpson

From: Alex Psirides [CCDHB] <Alex.Psirides@ccdhb.org.nz>

Sent: Thursday, 27 August 2020 12:47 pm

To: Andy Simpson <Andrew.Simpson@health.govt.nz>; Carleine Receveur <Carleine.Receveur@health.govt.nz>

Subject: Airport closures & effects upon regional & national aeromedical retrieval services

Dear Andy & Carleine,

I've attached a letter sent to the CEO of Wellington Airport last month addressing the effects of airport closures on aeromedical retrieval and the clinical risk incurred.

This risk is both regional and national. ICU services are unable to retrieve patients who require urgent tertiary services; national services are unable to retrieve patients from Wellington who require ECMO, Starship PICU, or for organ donation. We will be unable to transfer patients to national spinal or burns centres (Canterbury & Counties Manukau) as we ordinarily would. Planned runway closures coincide with the times these services are most time-critical (overnight).

As usual we continue to co-ordinate workarounds: using helicopter services when weather & distance allows (they frequently don't), retrieving those we can by (lengthy) road ambulance journeys instead (NMDHB excepted), and using Kapiti Coast airport as a second runway. We've not yet retrieved anyone by train or ferry (but have come close with both).

After discussion with John Tait, I'm notifying you for two reasons

- 1) Wellington Airport is planning to completely resurface the runway between next month & Christmas, taking advantage of the lack of international flights at night. I had written requesting consideration of workarounds for aeromedical traffic - our aircraft are smaller and require less runway. The airport response is this is not possible
- 2) Kapiti Coast airport is facing an uncertain future. It is the only other airport within reasonable driving distance of Wellington Hospital when Wellington airport is closed. Should Kapiti Coast airport close, when Wellington is also inaccessible due to weather or maintenance, DHBs elsewhere in the lower North & upper South islands will have reduced or no access to tertiary care. This contains significant clinical risk for time-critical conditions.

We will continue to work with aeromedical providers, the 6 DHBs we provide aeromedical retrieval services to within our tertiary catchment area, and our DHB flight clinical co-ordinators on workarounds on a case-by-case basis. Given both airport issues relate to essential infrastructure and are somewhat outside the scope of health, I'm relatively powerless to advocate beyond my domain.

Any advice you were able to provide, or advocacy at a national level for exploration of alternatives would be well received.

I will notify the medical leads for ODNZ, Starship PICU & the ECMO retrieval services once Wellington Airport have confirmed their closure schedule.

Thanks for considering.

Kind regards

Alex

Alex Psirides MB BS BSc (Hons) FCICM
Intensive Care Specialist & Co-Director, Wellington ICU
Medical Director, Aeromedical Retrieval Service
National Clinical Lead, Deteriorating Patient Programme, HQSC
Senior Clinical Lecturer, University of Otago

s 9(2)(a)

Wellington Regional Hospital, Newtown, Wellington 6021, New Zealand

wellingtomicu.com

alex.psirides@ccdhb.org.nz

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Alex Fuller

From: Jessica Plachecki
Sent: Friday, 28 August 2020 9:10 am
To: Mark Bailey
Subject: Fw: Airport closures & effects upon regional & national aeromedical retrieval services

This email contains content that can be viewed only in Lotus Notes. To view this content, double-click on this email within Outlook so it opens in a separate window. Then, double-click on this attachment to open it in Lotus Notes:



ActiveMail.nsf

A text rendering of the Active Mail content, if available, is shown below:

Hi Mark,

I'll add to the agenda for our meeting today.

Thanks,

Jessica Plachecki
Senior Portfolio Manager
National Ambulance Sector Office
Primary Health Care System Improvement and Innovation
Health System Improvement and Innovation
Ministry of Health

<http://www.health.govt.nz>
<mailto:Jessica.Plachecki@health.govt.nz>

----- Forwarded by Jessica Plachecki/MOH on 28/08/2020 09:09 am -----

From: "Carleine Receveur" <Carleine.Receveur@health.govt.nz>
To: "Jon Gaupset" <Jon.Gaupset@health.govt.nz>, "Jessica Plachecki" <Jessica.Plachecki@health.govt.nz>
Cc: "Graham Dyer" <Graham.Dyer@health.govt.nz>
Date: 27/08/2020 09:28 pm
Subject: FW: Airport closures & effects upon regional & national aeromedical retrieval services

Hi

This email from Alex came in earlier today.
I have acknowledged and said I would talk to Andrew Simpson.

Can we please discuss and brain storm some ideas.
Graham – will run past you on Monday.

Cheers
Carleine

From: Alex Psirides [CCDHB] <Alex.Psirides@ccdhb.org.nz>

Sent: Thursday, 27 August 2020 12:47 pm

To: Andy Simpson <Andrew.Simpson@health.govt.nz>; Carleine Receveur <Carleine.Receveur@health.govt.nz>

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Thanks for considering.

Kind regards

Alex

Alex Psirides MB BS BSc (Hons) FCICM
Intensive Care Specialist & Co-Director, Wellington ICU
Medical Director, Aeromedical Retrieval Service
National Clinical Lead, Deteriorating Patient Programme, HQSC
Senior Clinical Lecturer, University of Otago
s 9(2)(a) s 9(2)(a)
Wellington Regional Hospital, Newtown, Wellington 6021, New Zealand
wellingtonicu.com
alex.psirides@ccdhb.org.nz



2020-07-30

Wellington Airp...

Alex Fuller

From: Carleine Receveur
Sent: Thursday, 27 August 2020 9:02 pm
To: Jon Gaupset; Jessica Plachecki
Cc: Graham Dyer
Subject: FW: Airport closures & effects upon regional & national aeromedical retrieval services
Attachments: 2020-07-30 Wellington Airport letter.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Intensive Care Specialist & Co-Director, Wellington ICU

Medical Director, Aeromedical Retrieval Service

National Clinical Lead, Deteriorating Patient Programme, HQSC

Senior Clinical Lecturer, University of Otago

s 9(2)(a)

Wellington Regional Hospital, Newtown, Wellington 6021, New Zealand

wellingtonicu.com

alex.psirides@ccdhb.org.nz

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31st July 2020

*FAO: Steven Sanderson, CEO, Wellington International Airport Ltd, PO Box 14175,
Wellington*

Wellington Runway Closures Impacting Emergency Aeromedical Retrieval

Dear Steven,

We write to you as the medical and nursing leads of the Wellington Aeromedical Retrieval Service based in the Intensive Care Unit in Wellington Regional Hospital. We, along with our colleagues in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit provide 24/7 emergency aeromedical retrieval capability for over one million New Zealanders in the upper south and lower north islands, flying approximately 1400 missions per year. Due to the emergency nature of our work, much of it occurs after-hours. The two fixed wing and one rotary wing aircraft that allow us to rapidly respond to critically ill patients are provided by Life Flight, based at Wellington Airport. Around 75% of our work is carried out using fixed wing aircraft.

The recent prolonged Wellington Airport runway closures for sea wall work have significantly impacted our services. Although some patients have been able to be retrieved by helicopter instead, weather conditions, distance and the patient's condition often render this means of transfer non-viable. To mitigate some of this risk we have had to relocate aircraft and crew to Kapiti Coast Airport. This adds 60-90 minutes to an often time-critical situation as well as increases risk by exposing critically ill patients to prolonged road ambulance transfers. During the most recent Wellington Airport runway closures, we have had to retrieve patients via Paraparaumu on eight occasions. On other occasions, Life Flight pilots have requested that the runway remain open (in one case for an extra ten minutes) to allow critically ill patients to land in Wellington. Such cases are denied, requiring diversion to Kapiti.

Last year when all other New Zealand airports adjacent to major hospitals were closed due to fog, leaving Wellington as the only tertiary (advanced) hospital in the country with aeromedical retrieval capability, planned runway closure went ahead despite an appeal that it be deferred. Runway closures do not just reduce the retrieval service that we are able to provide - other aeromedical providers around the country who require Wellington Airport to access Wellington Regional Hospital have only been intermittently able to do so. This includes time critical services such as the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit team based in Starship Hospital and the national ECMO retrieval service based in Auckland City Hospital.

We completely understand that maintenance works are necessary to keep Wellington Airport viable and functional. However we are concerned that such events are scheduled with no consultation with or regard for the effects this has upon aeromedical retrieval services both locally and nationally. In time critical situations, this puts patients' lives at risk.

In partnership with our aircraft provider, we request consideration of the following:

- That aeromedical retrieval services be consulted prior to prolonged or major work being undertaken
- That there be some consideration for mechanisms by which fixed wing access for small aircraft such as those used by aeromedical transport services could be preserved during major runway works if possible
- If complete runway closures are unavoidable, that they be notified with as much advance warning as possible to enable contingency planning for services that depend on them

Please contact us if you require further information.

Sincerely,

Dr.Alex Psirides
MB BS BSc (Hons) FCICM
Intensive Care Specialist
Clinical Leader, Adult Flight Retrieval Service
Wellington Intensive Care Unit

alex.psirides@ccdhb.org.nz

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Karyn Hathaway RN
Associate Charge Nurse Manager
Clinical Nurse Specialist, Adult Flight
Retrieval Service
Wellington Intensive Care Unit

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