

UW Health: Med Flight expands to north-central Wisconsin

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Madison, WI – To enhance emergency services in north-central Wisconsin, a second regional Med Flight helicopter base will be set up in Portage at Divine Savior Healthcare.

“ We decided to create another regional base to cut response times for people in north- central Wisconsin,” said Frank Erdman, manager of critical care transport for UW Health. With the addition of the Portage base, Med Flight now will have three bases.

Med Flight also operates a regional base at the Iowa County Airport to respond to medical emergencies in southwestern Wisconsin. A third helicopter is stationed at University Hospital, a Level I trauma center, one of only two in Wisconsin.

Compared to flying from Madison, response times will be reduced by 20 minutes with the Portage helicopter. In addition to quicker response times, physicians and nurses will get to patients with life-threatening trauma and medical conditions faster. Med Flight is among only a handful of medical helicopter programs in the country that provide a physician on every flight.

“There are many basic emergency medical technicians and volunteer first responders that provide crucial, life-saving services in the Portage area,” said Dr.

Michael Steuerwald, Med Flight medical director “They are trained in essential medical services and request Med Flight when more complex care is needed.”

“Divine Savior Healthcare is focused on continuing to increase access to the best preventive and life-saving care for our community,” said Michael Decker, Divine Savior Healthcare president and CEO. “We are proud of the emergency care we provide our region and are looking forward to enhancing it with the addition of a Med Flight base in Portage. For those situations in which seconds count, it will allow those in our region with critical injuries and illnesses to receive the crucial care they need sooner.”

Med Flight is equipped with state-of-the-art navigational and safety equipment including automatic terrain-avoidance systems, night-vision goggles and instrument-flight rules (IFR) capability to enhance visual flying.

The Portage base is scheduled to begin operations in Summer, 2019.