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PRESS INFORMATION

Emergency Medical Charities plan to Merge

Following high level talks between Cambridgeshire-based emergency medical charity Magpas and the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA), the two organisations have agreed to plan a merger in order to create the most advanced emergency care service in the UK.

Both organisations provide a vital life-saving service across the region and have been sharing resources and expertise in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire since September 2007. This service has been operated in conjunction with the East of England Ambulance NHS Trust.

Under the arrangement, in addition to their own rapid response car, Magpas' highly skilled doctor and paramedic teams have been manning Anglia 2, the East Anglian Air Ambulance's state-of-the-art emergency helicopter. Anglia One, its first aircraft, has continued serving Norfolk and Suffolk.

Following their successful experience of working together, the EAAA and Magpas believe that a merger is the logical next step, reflecting their shared desire to provide the

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highest possible standard of emergency medical care to people in all four counties. It will also enable them to respond more quickly to changing NHS demands for health provision across the region.

The merger is at an early stage and both charities will now be working together closely to understand each other's operations in more detail helping them to maximize the benefits of the merger and to overcome any potential difficulties. They will also consult extensively with their respective staff, supporters, stakeholders and legislative bodies.

Simon Gray, Executive Director of the East Anglian Air Ambulance, commented: "We are excited about the opportunity this merger offers to give people in our region the highest standard of emergency medical care in the country. There is already so much synergy between the two charities and we also see an opportunity to share experience and best practice."

"Both charities are already highly respected in their field so it's important that we take time to consider how best to integrate our organisations by consulting those who help and support us."

Ian Brooke, Chief Executive of Magpas, commented. "The new charity that results from this merger will be fantastic for our region. The East Anglian Air Ambulance is widely regarded as one of the leading operations of its kind and Magpas' level of clinical excellence has led to it becoming the only charity of its kind in the UK to achieve Independent Healthcare Provider Status.

When you combine two beacons of excellence in this way the result will not only benefit our region. It will provide a service that will set the standard for the rest of the UK to follow."

Neither the EAAA nor Magpas receives government or National Lottery funding so both charities are entirely dependent on fund-raising and private donations.

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