



NEWS RELEASE

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HQCA reviews impact of medevac move to EIA

Follow-up review shows the change has not negatively impacted patients

(Calgary, AB) Today, the Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) released findings and recommendations from a review of the transport and care provided to critically-ill and time-sensitive medevac patients since the March 2013 Edmonton City Centre Airport closure. The review of 232 patient charts showed the extended transport time of critically-ill and time-sensitive patients from the Edmonton International Airport (EIA) to an Edmonton acute care hospital did not cause any patient safety or quality issues.

“We did not see any evidence of patient safety or care issues that could be associated directly with the relocation of medevac services to the Edmonton International Airport (EIA) from the Edmonton City Centre Airport,” explains Dr. John Tallon, MD, MSc, FRCPC, who led the HQCA Medevac Chart Review Quality Assurance Review Team. “In fact, the transfer time from the Edmonton International Airport to the tertiary care hospital (University of Alberta Hospital or Royal Alexandra Hospital) was only about 15 per cent of the overall patient journey time in the cases we studied.”

The HQCA outlines five recommendations to further enhance the medevac service for Albertans. These recommendations, which fall into four themes, are intended to:

1. Expedite the decision to transport patients
2. Improve patient care documentation and its availability
3. Improve monitoring and reporting on quality
4. Enhance the level of care provided through the implementation of critical care teams for fixed-wing medevac and optimization of air ambulance resources in the province

The full report and more details on these recommendations are available at www.hqca.ca This report also recognizes the work Alberta Health Services has done to improve medevac services since the HQCA’s first medevac review (in 2011), including that 15 (of the total 18) recommendations from the 2011 report have since been implemented.

The Health Quality Council of Alberta gathers and analyzes information and collaborates with Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services, health professions, academia, and other stakeholders to translate that knowledge into practical improvements to health service quality and patient safety in the health care system.

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