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Contact Phil Hackmann at 735-6258 or phil@proctornet.com



Andover fire and rescue volunteers summoned the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Air Response Team (DART) helicopter on Mother's Day in response to a very serious motorcycle accident. The DART helicopter had to be called again on Memorial Day for a motorcycle accident at Cemetery Corner in East Andover.

Photo: Canon Brownell

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# Motorcycle Accident Leads To Air Evacuation

By Anne Hewitt  
 Andover Rescue Squad

Hours of planning and years of training prepare our emergency services personnel to respond quickly and appropriately to unique situations when the time comes. It's like pieces of a puzzle that have to fit together just right. It's what has to happen when someone is critically injured, and when a life may depend on rapid transport to a hospital.

Such was the case on a recent Sunday afternoon when the Andover Rescue Squad and both Andover fire departments were called to the scene of a motorcycle accident. When the pager goes off and the type of situation is broadcast to responders, the mental wheels start turning...How many patients? How severe are the injuries? Is the scene safe? Who will respond? Will we need special equipment? Will we need more help?

As people and vehicles started to the scene, those with radios let others know they were coming. The first medical responder on the scene did a quick survey and reported the patient's condition over the radio. Firefighters, First Responders, EMT-Basics, a paramedic, and EMT-Intermediates - who can administer advanced life support techniques - arrived quickly on the scene and the decision was made to call DART - the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Air Response Team.

Fire fighters headed to Carr Field at Proctor Academy, the nearest safe landing site, to prepare for the landing, patient transfer, and evacuation. Within about 15 minutes, a helicopter staffed by a highly trained medical team arrived

At the accident scene, a more detailed assessment of the patient was made and life-threatening injuries treated immediately. As quickly and safely as possible, the patient was placed on a back-

board, moved to a cot, and transported by ambulance to the field. The distinctive whirring sound of the helicopter was like music to the ears of the six rescuers in the ambulance, engrossed in caring for the patient.

The DART medical team joined the ambulance crew; patient information was exchanged in medical dialog and codes. The DART team administered additional advanced medical care to stabilize the patient. The caregivers emerged in unison to efficiently transfer the patient to the waiting helicopter. Within minutes they arrived at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital in Lebanon, a top-notch Level One Trauma Center.

Adrenaline and energy left the caregivers and responders still on edge. Somewhat mechanically, equipment was gathered, and vehicles departed from the scene, returning Carr Field to the Proctor lacrosse players and spectators attracted by the event.

Remaining heightened emotions calmed over the next few hours it took to restore the ambulance to "in-service" condition. The responders anxiously awaited word about the patient's condition and prognosis.

Conversations between responders about all aspects of the event will continue for days or even weeks. How did we do? What could we have done better? Was there any other equipment we needed?

Each incident that we experience better trains and prepares us for the next occurrence, that, while we wish it would never come, inevitably will.

Please be careful! Use safety precautions! Wear seatbelts and helmets!

Questions about the Andover Rescue Squad can be directed to President Ed Becker at 735-5338.

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