

PRESS RELEASE



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Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road, Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHCC lauds all involved in the successful transfer of patients needing tertiary care

Over the past week, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) successfully transferred two patients off-island for tertiary care, using air ambulance transport, with support from the CNMI Office of the Governor, the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, the Commonwealth Ports Authority, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. While the CHCC provides primary care for all residents of the CNMI, patients requiring the type of care considered highly specialized that usually involves advanced and complex procedures may need transfers to a hospital facility outside the CNMI.

Air ambulance transport is the fastest method of transporting critically ill patients from one facility to another, and it includes being accompanied by qualified medical staff. Certain conditions require the use of air ambulance transport because it is the most appropriate and effective mode of transport for that patient under specific circumstances and when the closest proximity to an available hospital facility is located beyond Guam.

The coordination of emergency air ambulance transport may take upward to 72 hours before a patient is flown because coordination includes:

- The attending physician discussing the care of the patient from stabilization of the patient to the arrival of the patient at the transfer facility to ensure seamless transition in care.
- Ensuring the accepting facility has an available bed to accept and care for the patient upon arrival and after surgery.
- Ensuring availability of emergency air ambulance from the closest proximity.
- Working with the patient's insurance plan to ensure coverage for the medical care at the transfer facility.
- Ensuring there is no barrier for immigration entry for the patient and their escort.
- Producing all medical records, vaccination records, and COVID-19 test results especially when COVID-19 vaccination is required.
- Managing all details of ground travel to and from the airport.

The CHCC remains committed to delivering the best outcome for each and every one of its patients, whether off or on island as quickly as possible. It is currently collaborating with the CNMI Legislature on establishing the Health Network Program, a revision of the Medical Referral Services Office—a network of off-island providers available to see the residents of the CNMI—that will operate under the CHCC.

The goals of the Health Network Program include streamlining assistance for eligible patients with demonstrated needs to access tertiary care and allowing the CHCC to integrate patient care and

respond quickly to changes in the capacity of on-island health care providers to treat the residents of the CNMI.

For more information about CHCC programs, follow @cnmichcc on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; visit <https://www.chcc.health>; or call (670) 234-8950.

This press release may be found online at <https://www.chcc.health/pressrelease.php>.