



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
May 14, 2010

BC Ambulance Service

NEW MEMBERS ADDED TO ELITE INFANT TRANSPORT TEAM

VANCOUVER – Six new paramedics are joining BC Ambulance Service’s (BCAS) Infant Transport Team (ITT), the highly-specialized unit that provides emergency transport and medical care for neo-natal, pediatric and high-risk obstetric patients from across British Columbia.

“The Infant Transport Team plays a critical role in the emergency health care system by treating and transporting high-risk maternity patients, struggling newborns and very sick or injured children to BC Children’s Hospital and BC Women’s Hospital for treatment,” said BCAS Acting Chief Operating Officer Les Fisher. “We are extremely proud of this team because it’s the only one of its kind in the world that is comprised entirely of paramedics.”

The ITT provides expert care and transport to maternity patients and patients under 16 years old requiring a higher level of care. The team will travel to any destination in British Columbia, weather permitting, and also provides support to the Yukon. The ITT responded to 2,444 calls in 2009/10.

“This cohort is the first through the revised ITT training program that was developed in partnership with the local medical community and delivered by the BC Ambulance Service,” said Fisher. “The new ITT paramedics completed a specific 18-month training program focused on providing care to children to learn advanced skills such as intubation, IVs and use of a wide variety of monitors, ventilators, IV pumps and medications.”

The ITT utilizes two helicopters and three fixed wing airplanes that are specially-equipped and under contract to the BCAS. In addition to the Vancouver-based aircraft, BCAS is able to draw on numerous aircraft located throughout the province as needed. Four ground ambulances are dedicated solely for use by the ITT and are outfitted with specialized equipment to care for young patients.

A graduation ceremony is being held at 1 pm today at the Chan Centre for Family Health Education at the Child and Family Research Institute on the BC Children’s site in Vancouver.

-30-

Media contact: Chris Harbord
BCAS Communications
250 953-3651 or 250 812-5854