



News Release

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New LED helipad lighting makes vital difference at Dorset County Hospital

New helipad lighting is making a vital difference at Dorset County Hospital.

The new lighting was recently installed following a generous donation from the Helicopter Emergency Landing Pads (HELP) Appeal, a national charity set up to help provide Major Trauma Centres with the necessary infrastructure to enable and improve night landing.

In an emergency, when time is of the essence, being able to land an air ambulance seconds away from specialist care is crucial. For many patients, a helipad could represent the difference between life and death.

A total of £27,517.70 was donated by the HELP Appeal to allow the hospital's helipad perimeter lighting to be upgraded from the original white lights, to modern green LED lights, that are significantly more visible.

Following the installation, Robert Bertram, Chief Executive of the HELP Appeal, paid a visit to get a first-hand glimpse of the new lighting.

He was joined by members of the Emergency Department and the Estates Team at DCH as well as the crew from the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and their helicopter Pegasus.

Mr Bertram said: "Patients can become seriously ill or injured at any time of the day or night. Dorset County Hospital helipad's new, state-of-the-art lighting system reflects this by allowing air ambulances to land, even when it's dark, so patients can get the urgent treatment they need at any time."

Dr Ian Mew, Consultant in Anaesthetics and Critical Care Medicine, added: "As well as bringing patients to Dorset County Hospital, the helicopter also plays a vital role in transferring time-critical patients to tertiary hospitals such as Southampton, Bristol or Kings Hospital in London for emergency intervention.

"Ensuring the safety of the aircraft which operates at night as well as during the daytime is essential and these new lights help to ensure the HEMS crew, the patients and those around the helipad are kept safe at all times."

Further improvements are also scheduled for the hospital helipad, also funded by the HELP Appeal.

Anthony Brewis, Estates Programme Manager at DCH, said: “The combination of improvements, particularly around lighting, will potentially minimise the landing times for the Air Ambulance and other helicopters such as the Search and Rescue unit to allow patients to be disembarked and moved into clinical areas faster.

“The HELP Appeal has made this possible as the Trust’s demand for capital improvements far outweigh the supply of funding and any money we would have spent on these improvements in future can now be assigned to improvements in other areas to benefit patients.”

For more information about the HELP Appeal, visit <https://helpappeal.org.uk/>

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PHOTOS:

Chief Executive of the HELP Appeal, Robert Bertram and Service Manager, Jennifer Frampton, alongside members of DCH’s Emergency Department, Estates Team and the crew from Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance

The new LED helipad lights pictured from the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance

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