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Defining Effect



Mercy Air Care Celebrates 25 Years of Service

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Thursday, April 12, 2012

In May of 1987, Marian Health Center (now Mercy Medical Center) brought a new element of emergency medicine to Siouxland. That's when Mercy Air Care (MAC) launched its new service to the residents of the region.

SIOUX CITY, IA — In the ensuing 25 years, Mercy Air Care has logged nearly 9,000 medical flights to communities across the tri-state region. To acknowledge the silver anniversary of Mercy Air Care, Mercy Medical Center is hosting a community-wide celebration to recognize the MAC flight crews, EMS responders, regional hospitals and the thousands of patients who have been served by MAC during its 25 years of service to the tri-state region.

On Saturday, May 5th at 6 p.m., Mercy's new EC 135 helicopter will land on the riverfront near the Marina Inn in South Sioux City. On board the aircraft will be four special passengers – all of whom have a personal story to tell about the role MAC has played in their lives.

On July 19, 1989, the Marian Health Center flight crew was hovering over the Sioux City airport in anticipation of the landing of the crippled United Airlines Flight 232. On board with the flight crew was Dr. David Greco, the director of the Marian Health Center Emergency Department and, ironically, the founder of Mercy Air Care. Dr. Greco and the MAC helicopter landed just minutes after Flight 232 crashed and Dr. Greco began to provide medical care to the injured.

Dr. Greco and the entire Siouxland physician community were acknowledged the world-over for the job they did under such traumatic conditions. In the ensuing years, Dr. Greco left Sioux City and is now residing in California. In recognition of MAC's 25th anniversary, Dr. Greco will be returning to Sioux City and, in fact, will be a passenger on the Mercy helicopter as it lands at the Marina Inn for the May 5th silver anniversary celebration.

Another passenger on board the MAC helicopter on May 5th will be Captain Al Haynes, the pilot of United Flight 232. Captain Haynes was brought to Marian Health Center where Dr. David Greco served as one of his care providers. Captain Haynes and Dr. Greco have not seen each other since 1989, the year of the tragic accident.

The two additional passengers on board for the 25th anniversary celebration are two Siouxland area residents, each of whom were brought to Mercy Medical Center by the MAC crew after suffering traumatic injuries.

John Readman was working in a grain bin in Danbury last summer and became trapped by the settling grain. MAC was dispatched to Danbury where the flight nurse and paramedic stabilized Readman as rescue crews from the Woodbury County Sheriff's Office, Danbury Fire Department, and Sergeant Bluff Fire and Rescue worked frantically to remove him from the bin. Readman was



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OPINION POLL

How widespread is the practice of upcoding — where health care providers charge Medicare, Medicaid and other insurance payers for more expensive procedures than those performed?

It's rampant. Nearly every health care provider does it.

It happens frequently. Many health care providers feel they have to do it to stay viable.

It happens occasionally. Most health care providers only bill for services provided and would never intentionally upcode.

It rarely happens. Upcoding has been sensationalized in the media but hardly ever occurs.

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flown to Mercy where he was treated for what potentially could have been life-threatening injuries.

The other passenger on board the May 5th anniversary flight will be a young man from Jackson, Nebraska. 12-year old Alexander Ramirez was working on a farm with his grandfather when Alexander's arm became entangled in farm machinery. His arm was severed but thanks to the quick response from the MAC crew, Alexander was brought to Mercy Medical Center where the trauma team stabilized the young man in preparation for his flight later that day to Omaha where his arm was successfully reattached.

Local emergency response teams from nearby communities, physicians, other hospitals who have used MAC to transport their patients, volunteers, former patients and the general public are invited to join Dr. Greco and Captain Haynes and the other special guests at the MAC 25th anniversary celebration.

The aircraft will land on the Marina Inn riverfront at 6:00 p.m. and a short program will begin at 7 p.m. All attendees will have a chance to meet Captain Haynes, Dr. Greco and members of the MAC flight crew. A dance will begin at 8:00 p.m.

The event is free and open to the public.

About Mercy Medical Center

Living the traditions, visions and values of the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Medical Center—Sioux City has grown into a 238-bed (staffed) regional center that meets the needs of residents in a 33-county area. Mercy is the only Level-II Trauma Center in western Iowa and is one of only four trauma care facilities in the state of Iowa to receive verification from the American College of Surgeons.

HealthGrades, the nation's leading independent hospital ratings agency, has identified Mercy Medical Center as the #1 hospital in the state of Iowa for cardiac care, neurosurgery and neurosciences. In addition, Mercy is ranked as one of America's Top-100 hospitals for cardiac care and has more 5-Star ratings than any hospital in the city or region.

*Mercy provides an entire continuum of preventive, primary, acute and tertiary healthcare services and is nationally recognized in several clinical areas. Mercy Medical Services, a partner to the medical center, operates 30 family practice and 9 specialty clinics in Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota. Additionally, Mercy owns Baum Harmon Mercy Hospital in Primghar, Iowa and Oakland Mercy Hospital in Oakland, Nebraska, and manages Hawarden Community Hospital in Hawarden, Iowa, and Pender Community Hospital in Pender, Nebraska. Mercy Medical Center—Sioux City is a member of **Trinity Health of Novi, Michigan**, the fourth largest Catholic healthcare system in the nation.*

Source: Mercy Medical Center

Previous Poll:
How will the Supreme Court rule on the constitutionality of the health care reform act's minimum coverage provision?

37% Rule it constitutional. Congress is within its right to address this pressing national economic and social issue and to tax and regulate commerce.

35% Repeal the provision. The court will rule congress has no authority to require citizens to buy health insurance.

18% Decide to not decide. The court will find challenges to the law are premature and will avoid ruling until the provision goes into effect in 2014.

9% Strike down the entire law. The court will rule the act unconstitutional and reverse the parts of the act already in effect.

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