

**Table 1: Air Ambulance Survey Summary with Flight, Accreditation, Membership Information**

	Operational Base	Profit / NonProfit	In MT Flights 2014		Flights out of state 2014		Total 2014 transports	Average response time		Accreditation?	Decider of emergency?	MT uniform dispatch protocols?	Membership sales?	Reciprocal agreements? How many?
			Fixed	Rotor	Fixed	Rotor		Fixed	Rotor					
Air Idaho Rescue /Air Methods	FW=Idaho Falls RW=W. Yellowstone	Profit	skipped Q	skipped Q	skipped Q	skipped Q	skipped Q	15 mins	8 mins	skipped Q	skipped Q	Yes	skipped Q	skipped Q
A.L.E.R.T./ Kalispell Regional Medical Center	Kalispell	Not-for-profit	skipped Q	skipped Q	skipped Q	skipped Q	skipped Q	30 mins.	5 mins.	None	referring physician	skipped Q	Yes - \$59 individual \$100 family	No
Benefis Mercy Flight	Great Falls	Not-for-profit	371	526	80	0	919*	39 mins	11 mins	CAMTS	Referring QMP	No	No	skipped Q
Billings Clinic MedFlight	Billings	Not-for-profit	453	NA	101	NA	676	35 mins	NA		sending and receiving MDs	See Note 3		No
HELP Flight (St. Vincent's)	Billings	Not-for-profit	317	412	82	0	806*	45 mins	11.56 mins	CAMTS	Care managers & flight managers. See Note 2	No	Yes - \$59 for individual or family	Yes, AAMPS members (Lifeflight and NW Medstar)
Life Flight (Butte)														
MT Medical Transport	Helena	Profit	94	0	72	0	166	50 mins	NA		Referring physician	No	No	
Northeast MT Stat Air	Glasgow	Not-for-profit	532	NA	22	NA	554	20-30 mins	NA	See note 1	physician in consult with receiving	No	No	No
NW MedStar	Missoula	Not-for-profit	114	195	130	3	442 (Msla)	13.9 mins	8.3 mins	CAMTS	physician or EMS agency	No	No	Yes (8)
Sanford AirMed	Dickinson ND	Not-for-profit	0	0	0	1	3,186	20 mins	15 mins	CAMTS	Referring physician	No	No	No
Summit / REACH Valley Med Flight, Inc.**	Belgrade, Helena (former Eagle Med in Butte)													
	skipped Q	Profit	skipped Q	skipped Q	skipped Q					NAAMTA				

**Abbreviations:** CAMTS; QMP = Qualified Medical Provider; CAMTS= Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems; NAAMTA=National Accreditation Alliance of Medical Transport Applications

\*For Benefis, adds to 977. For HELP Flight adds to 811

\*\*Valley MedFlight is independent but managed by Air Medical Resource Group, which handles accounting and legal issues for a variety of air and ground ambulances.

**Note 1:** Northeast Stat Air listed various certifications, such as Transport Nurse Advance Trauma Course, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Pediatric Advanced Life Support, but not CAMTS or NAAMTA.

**Note 2:** Use prescheduled flights one to several days in advance. Must be preauthorized by insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid.

**Note 3:** Billings Clinic MedFlight noted that all flight programs have their own dispatch centers and dispatchers, so there's an assumption that protocols are specific to the program and may differ based on whether the vehicle is rotor wing or fixed wing.

**Table 2: Air Ambulance Survey Billing Responses**

Air Ambulance Firm	Insurance as full payment	Medicare	Medicaid # (not %)	Uninsured	Balance Billed	In an Insurance Network?	# of lawsuits?	Amount written off in 2014?	Average sent to collections in last 2 yrs? Or long-term pay plan?	Noncontract Lift-off Rate?		Noncontract Loaded Mile Rate?		Contract Lift-off Rate?		Rate?		Reason for change?	Profit Margins?	
										2008-base	current-base	2008	current	2008-base	current base	2008	current			
Air Idaho Rescue / Air Methods																				
A.L.E.R.T. / Kalispell Regional Medical Center	skipped Q		skipped Q			Allegiance		skipped Q	skipped Q		skipped Q		skipped Q		skipped Q		skipped Q			
Benefis Mercy Flight			skipped Q		0	e.g. BCBS, Allegiance					skipped Q		skipped Q		skipped Q		skipped Q		skipped Q	
Billings Clinic MedFlight	10%	53%	60 in 2014 24 in 2015*	10%	27%	BCBS	0	\$3,000,000; not clear what for Montanans specificall	0 to collections; 239 to long-term pay		RW-\$7,500	RW-\$12,625	RW - \$12	RW-\$60		skipped Q		skipped Q	Inflation, competition	skipped Q
HELP Flight (St. Vincent's)	27%	33%	87 in 2014; 81 in 2015*	23%	1%	Allegiance, BCBS, Cigna, MT Health Co-Op	none known	\$10 million (collected abt 30% of	unknown		In 2012: RW=\$9,609 FW=\$8,264	RW=\$11,530 FW=\$9,916	In 2012: RW=\$78 FW=\$40	RW=\$100 FW=\$80		varies by insurer		varies by insurer		skipped Q
Life Flight																				
Montana Medical Transport	147	16	5 in 2014; 3 in 2015*	3	0	BCBS, Allegiance, Pac. Health, Tri-Care, MT Health Co-Op		Missoula: \$222,416 charity; \$349,156 bad debt			\$5,993	\$9,023	\$17.22	\$26	same as noncontract			Inflation about 5.8%/yr	Margins 16 to 25% range	
Northeast Montana STAT Air	25%	42%	94	12%	21%		0		35	\$4,840	\$13,534	\$17.60	\$38.40	NA	#####	NA	\$32.00	See Note	8.77%	
NW MedStar	0	35%	136 in 2014; 125 in 2015*	4%	31%	Group Health 1st choice				NA	RW-\$15,246 FW-\$13,116.4	NA	RW-\$133.10 FW-\$110.10	NA	same as noncontract	NA	same as noncontract	NA		
Sanford AirMed	55%	27%	Yes (in ND)	10%	8%		0		0		RW-\$11,062 FW-\$8,596		RW-\$88 FW-\$37		varies by contract		varies by contract	NA	0-7% range	
Summit / REACH																				
Valley Med Flight						Yes (no other info)	0		0										See Note 2.	

\* Year to date  
**Note 1** - Annual Medicare rate changes and preferred provider contracts  
**Note 2** - Increase in aircraft acquisition costs. Higher salary, fuel, maintenance costs. Decrease in reimbursement from government and commercial payors. Increased costs from regulation, legal costs, etc.  
**Acronyms:** FW=fixed wing RW = rotor

**Comments:** Northeast MT Stat Air noted they had done 24 appeals for patients whose insurance companies had denied payment. They were able to get denials reversed and get full payment. They noted some insurers pay varying amounts and some pay patients, who may not pay air ambulance. Northeast MT Stat Air also noted that Medicaid payment rates are a bigger problem than Medicare rates because, while Medicare pays \$4,511.36 base rate plus \$12.80 a loaded mile from Glasgow to Billings, Medicaid would pay oly

**Additional Comments:** 1) A.L.E.R.T./KRMC said all patients using the A.L.E.R.T. services had access to KRMC's financial assistance policies, including charity care. 2) Valley MedFlight's response was that the Airline Deregulation Act preempts the State of Montana from passing any legislation that will effect rates, routes, or services. 3) Northeast MT Stat Air noted that "What ... needs to be understood is that the cpacity and capabilities of many rural facilities from which flights depart vary widely... Many rural emergency rooms are covered by mid-level providers (nurse practitioners and physician assistants)... Mid-levels bring extreme benefit to the rural communities they serve, but their training is not that of a physician. These facilities also do not have teh advantage of the full scope of diagnostic tools available in a tertiary setting. Consequently, when they are making decisions to transfer, they depend greatly on the advice of the more skilled physician specialist at the receiving tertiary care center. ... The decision to fly is more often highly influenced by the physician at the tertiary care center.