



New Learjet 31s for AirLife Denver

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AirLife Denver has debuted two new Learjet 31s that were recently added to its medical flight programme. One of the planes paid a visit to the Imperial and Grand Nebraska airports in the state of Nebraska, demonstrating to local citizens the Learjet 31s' capabilities as a medical resource for rural communities. The new models replace the Learjet 25s the company has used for several years with significant reliability. The new jets have improved safety features



AirLife Denver's new Learjet 31s

AirLife Denver

and will minimise out-of-hospital time for patients. Once patients arrive at their base airport, they are typically transferred by an AirLife helicopter directly to the hospitals for continued care, further reducing this time. Jana Williams, programme director for AirLife Denver, commented: "Safety is of utmost importance to AirLife Denver, and this is yet another investment we have made to demonstrate that." She added that the Learjet 31 model was chosen thanks to its performance features, high speed and safety back-up systems. She continued: "All of this together provides the best possible outcomes for patients."

Travelling throughout an eight-state region at 500 mph, the jets feature system redundancies with back-ups for hydraulics and other critical avionics, terrain awareness warning systems (TAWS) and dual pilots. The aircraft also have increased airport access with features like a state-of-the-art GPS navigation system and shorter runway landing capabilities. Williams said: "All of these features improve our ability to reach patients and communities in need. This is particularly important in weather-

related scenarios, because it gives us the most and safest options." Additional safety features include a high-tech anti-icing system, modern 'quiet' engines, and 30-per-cent better fuel efficiency helping to reduce overall cost of transports. Each flight is staffed with two nurses and two pilots and can allow a family member to travel with the patient in some cases. The jets are fully equipped for AirLife Denver's specialised paediatric, stroke, high-risk obstetrical and neonatal transport teams.

Flight nurse Bob Greene said he was grateful for the upgrades and has already seen their impact on patient care: "The new jets are much quieter to work in and they allow us better rural access with remarkable speed. I just flew a patient who suffered a stroke. The clock was ticking. Our jet allowed us to get her to the specialised care she needed in time to stop her symptoms, and in this case, reverse them."



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The Learjet 31s will mainly be used for medical transportation to and from communities for critical patients that wouldn't otherwise have Denver's medical resources available to them. It will also be a secondary transport option when the AirLife Denver helicopters are not available or appropriate for transporting the patient. AirLife Denver partners with International Jet Aviation at Centennial Airport, which maintains and operates the planes and provides the pilot and mechanic team members.

In addition to the jets, AirLife Denver has three Bell 407 helicopters and two ground critical care transport (CCT) ambulances. Both leased jets are stationed at Centennial Airport, while one helicopter is based at Sky Ridge Medical Center, one at The Medical Center of Aurora North and the third at Frederick/Firestone Station #2. One CCT is stationed at Swedish Medical Center, where AirLife Denver's operational base is and the other specifically designed for neonatal and pediatric transport in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children and is stationed at Presbyterian/St Luke's Medical Center.