



NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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Air St. Luke's to Provide Medical Air Transport Services in the Magic Valley

Twin Falls, ID (May 29, 2007) – Officials from St. Luke's Magic Valley Regional Medical Center announced today that the hospital's local board of directors voted unanimously to transition the medical air transport service stationed at the hospital from Saint Alphonsus Life Flight to Air St. Luke's, a service provide by St. Luke's Health System. The transition is expected to be finalized by early November.

“The Board's decision to terminate the hospital's contract with Saint Alphonsus is in no way related to any dissatisfaction or concern with the services that were provided by Life Flight,” said John Kee, CEO of St. Luke's Magic Valley Regional Medical Center. “The change-over of medical air transport providers was made with service integration, efficiencies and collaboration across the St. Luke's system in mind, and was an anticipated aspect of the merger between St. Luke's and Magic Valley Regional Medical Center which was finalized in July.” Kee also stressed that the transition to Air St. Luke's will not impact the hospital patients are transported to. “As always, patients who require medical air transport will be taken to the hospital most appropriate for their medical needs.”

An additional outcome of the Board and medical staff's thoughtful consideration of this transition was the identification of the opportunity for the development of a jointly operated medical air transport service in the region. “St. Luke's has long held the view that the formation of a collaborative service is in the best interest of patients living in the region,” added Kee. “We're hopeful that such a service could be developed in the future with partner hospitals including Saint Alphonsus.”

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Patients are not expected to be impacted by the change in service providers. A variety of medical air transport providers will continue to still serve the Magic Valley region and will continue to be integrated with ground based paramedic services and local Quick Response Units. “The Magic Valley region is supported by top-notch emergency response personnel from our Magic Valley Paramedics to the Quick Response Units that serve Twin Falls,” said Kevin Kraal, MD, Medical Director for Magic Valley Paramedics and Twin Falls County Quick Response Units. “Having the support of quality medical air transport partners is critical to the services we provide to the community and we are anticipating a smooth transition as the hospital makes this change.”

Residents who own memberships in the Life Flight program will have their memberships honored by Air St. Luke’s. In fact, many medical transport services throughout the northwest share reciprocal relationships so memberships are honored regardless of the organization that provides the transport.

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