

PROPOSED OVERLOOK HELIPAD

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

While the helipad will be primarily used for the inter-hospital transfer of stroke patients, isn't this just a first step in Overlook becoming a trauma center?

Overlook is not and will not be a trauma center, and this will not change with the addition of the helipad. The state regulates the number and location of trauma centers to ensure appropriate coverage. Fortunately, our area is already well-served by trauma centers at Morristown Memorial Hospital and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

If Overlook isn't a trauma center and has no intention of becoming one, why does it need a helipad?

The helipad will increase the speed with which stroke patients can be transferred from other hospitals to Overlook. The helipad will save an estimated 20 minutes of transport time from the current two-step process (air then ground transport) used to transfer critical stroke patients.

What difference can 20 minutes make to a stroke patient?

While this time can make the difference between life and death, more often it can have a major impact on the quality of a patient's life after a stroke. As emphasized in a 2006 American Heart Association Scientific Statement, the chance of a good recovery decreases by 33 percent with each hour's delay in receiving stroke care. For every minute lost, mobility and functionality decline – this can mean loss of movement in a limb, worsened speech or reduced cognitive function.

Why does a stroke patient who is already at a hospital need to be transferred to Overlook?

Overlook has the best neurological diagnostic/treatment center in the region. The hospital has created a stroke team with physicians, nurses and other hospital staff that functions like a stroke special response unit. Overlook was the first Comprehensive Stroke Center designated by the state of New Jersey and is one of a small number of truly state-of-the-art stroke centers that exist in the United States.

Can't stroke patients needing advanced treatments be transferred to Morristown Memorial Hospital since it already has a helipad?

Stroke patients needing advanced treatment are primarily transferred to Overlook because along with its the

advanced diagnostics and treatment, it has a dedicated nursing team with specialized neuroscience training.

There are specialized medical services that Overlook provides that even Morristown Memorial does not offer. Overlook is equipped with two neuroangiography suites (essential equipment for brain blood clot removal), the most advanced CT scanner available anywhere to rapidly and non-invasively assess brain artery blockage and the viability of damaged brain, and a dedicated Neuroscience intensive care unit. In addition to this equipment, we have dedicated and highly-trained physicians, nurses and technologists who have more experience dealing with these critically ill patients than any center in the region. Because of this, last year Morristown Memorial transferred (by ambulance) 41 stroke patients to Overlook.

The helipad will allow for more efficient transfer of patients from referring hospitals to Overlook; the proximity of Morristown Memorial's stroke center has no bearing on the need to bring critical stroke patients from other communities to the state's premier stroke center—at Overlook—via air transport.

With the helipad will more stroke patients be transferred to Overlook by air for treatment?

No. The hospital currently receives fewer than 10 stroke patients by helicopter per month. The addition of the helipad is not expected to impact the number of patients transferred to Overlook because only certain stroke patients can benefit from Overlook's sophisticated capabilities.

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THE PASSION TO LEAD

Will there be additional helicopter flights into Summit?

Yes. Although, the addition of the helipad will not impact the number of helicopter flights transporting stroke patients to Overlook, the number of helicopter flights into Summit will increase by an estimated 5 to 9 flights per month. Currently some other patients being air transported to Overlook arrive via a similar two-step process which creates the need for hospital-bound ambulances travelling from landing sites through the community. Each helicopter transfer made directly to the rooftop helipad will eliminate the need for emergency ground transport and warning sirens. The rooftop helipad proposed at Overlook has been chosen and is uniquely suited to minimize any potential disturbance in the community and to maximize public safety.

How safe is the new process?

The helipad will increase the safety of the transfer of stroke patients to Overlook. The helicopter pilot prefers landing at the helipad versus the existing locations because it would be a known entity, providing a greater level of control. It is a predictable landing location that will make for a safer, easier and more expeditious transfer.

What kind of noise will the helicopter generate and will it impact our neighborhood environment?

This is very different from what you may have seen or heard on MASH reruns.

Atlantic Air One will be the primary helicopter used to bring patients to the hospital. The helicopter, an EC-135 Eurocopter, has an enclosed tail fan and low-decibel twin engines. The helicopter is one of the quietest in operation—in fact, the sound of passing cars eclipses that of the EC-135. The sound will likely not be noticed by pedestrians given the helipad's rooftop location.

Will the helicopter hover?

No. Unlike the news choppers or helicopters you've seen in movies or on television, air ambulance helicopters do not hover, but instead travel directly from one place to another, landing as quickly and safely as possible. Atlantic Air One will fly the published flight path which is a direct and safe route in order to quickly transfer the patient to Overlook.

Won't the helipad decrease property values?

According to real estate agents, the helipad will not impact property values.

Will this change the character of the Summit community?

In fact, the helipad will have a positive impact on the community. Instead of landing on the ground in the Summit area, the helicopter will land on the hospital rooftop resulting in less noise and visual presence.

In addition, the appearance of the rooftop will improve because we will be able to reduce the number of antennas to 83 from 137.

Overlook is the State's first Comprehensive Stroke Center. What does that designation mean?

Picture a bicycle wheel—Overlook can be thought of as the hub and the referring hospitals as the spokes. The referring hospitals transfer patients needing advanced treatment to Overlook.

Recognizing the importance of fast treatment, in 2004, New Jersey enacted legislation with a goal of providing every resident access to high-level stroke care within 30 minutes. Hospitals worked together to establish a network of Primary and Comprehensive Stroke Centers. Primary Stroke Centers provide the initial, acute treatment while Comprehensive Stroke Centers provide more advanced treatment. Comprehensive Stroke Centers also play an important role in supporting and training staff at Primary Stroke Centers.

Overlook was the state's first designated Comprehensive Stroke Center signifying Overlook's leadership role in quickly and effectively treating stroke patients.