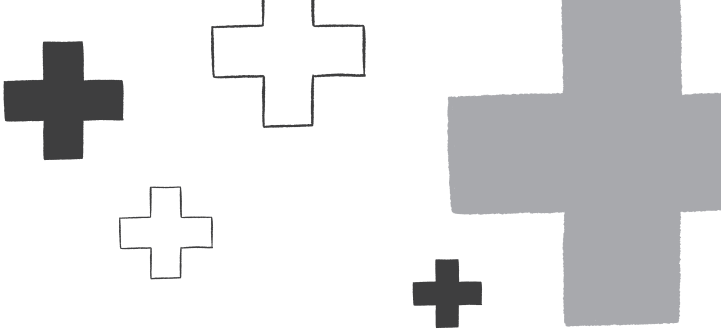
MODERN-DAY HEALTH HEROES



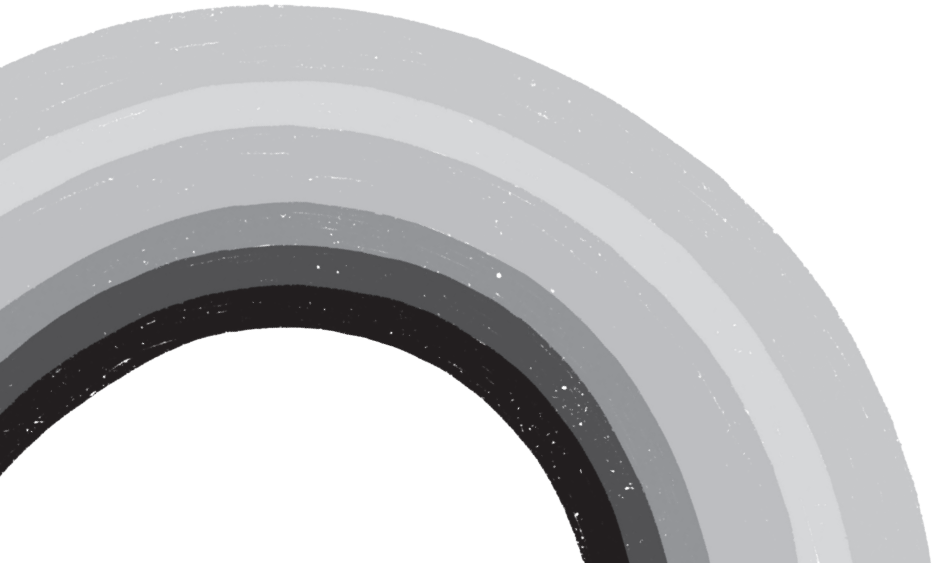


Health heroes throughout history came from all different places and backgrounds and did all sorts of healthcare jobs – and the same is true today. Now we're going to take you on a journey around some of the places you might find them, starting with a trip to the hospital.

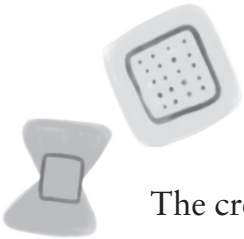


HEALTH HEROES ON THE MOVE

Something has happened: perhaps you're not feeling well or you've had an accident and you have to go to hospital. Often we make our own way there, either for an appointment or if we've had a minor accident, but sometimes hospital transport – such as an ambulance, air ambulance (helicopter or plane) or even boat – with a specialist crew has to be sent to bring us in.









The crew aboard an ambulance varies from situation to situation, but can include:

* **A** *DRIVER* **– ambulance drivers may or may not be qualified to provide medical care; sometimes they are needed to help transfer the patient, for example by stretcher**

* **A** *FIRST RESPONDER* **who can provide early critical care, such as resuscitation – these do not require medical training beyond first aid**

* **An** *EMERGENCY TECHNICIAN* **or** *AMBULANCE TECHNICIAN* **– these are usually trained in a range of emergency care skills, including resuscitation, controlling bleeding, giving medicines and providing oxygen**










* A *PARAMEDIC* **who has training to provide more advanced medical assistance, such as putting a cannula into a vein to deliver medicine, and intubation**

* A *REGISTERED NURSE* – **who sometimes attends instead of a paramedic, to provide highly skilled care**

* A *DOCTOR*



Here's what some of the heroes who work in these fast-paced jobs have to say about their experiences.




JAMIE MILES

Jamie is a paramedic working in Yorkshire, England. It was the combination of 'a degree of thrill and excitement with my enthusiasm for science' that made him want to do the job. Jamie says:

'I LOVE attending patients where you can make a DIFFERENCE.'

One example of this was when he saved a newborn baby's life. 'I was working on a solo car [on his own as opposed to with team-mates] and got called to a woman

who had given birth, and the baby wasn't breathing. I treated the baby by taking over her breathing and it worked! She started to pink up (colour came back into her skin) and take small breaths.'

Paramedics become very familiar with the area they work in. 'Being a paramedic, your experiences are made in the community you serve. An old hand once told me that as they drive from job to job, past houses or streets they've previously attended, the memory of the cases never fades. I completely agree.'



LUKE SUMMERS

Luke is in the process of becoming an emergency consultant, but he has worked as a retrieval registrar in Australia for many years. This means he has worked in helicopters,

'flying around taking patients from where they get sick or injured to where the HELP is . . .

'This was a great opportunity to bring all my training together to look after patients by myself before I started work as a consultant. But more importantly I got to

do it from the back of a helicopter flying all over the beautiful Queensland coast!'

Luke loved his helicopter work for a number of reasons. 'There is no better feeling than landing in a remote area where someone has been injured (especially if you have to **winch** in), then sorting them out and taking them to the hospital. You know they are probably having the worst time and by being there you get to make it bearable. Sometimes a patient will have something like a dislocated shoulder, or a bead stuck in their nose, or another fixable problem and you get to make it all better there and then. Plus, helicopters.'

It's not all dramatic rescues and stunning views – there are sad and scary moments in Luke's job too. 'Most of the worst stories that people have probably involve an emergency department. It's where you

try to stop people from dying from things that would otherwise kill them. We are not always successful despite our best efforts.'

But sometimes it really is just as cool as it sounds. 'I once winched someone who was really sick from a cruise ship whilst it was sailing through the Coral Sea. We had to winch on to the deck and then back up again with the patient – not one to forget in a hurry.

'I also did a couple of winches from a mountain which was really cool. Very different from working in a hospital.'


AMBULANCE

TAYLOR HARKNESS

Taylor worked as a paramedic in America for many years. He is also a yoga instructor, who teaches all over the world, and is now working as an emergency nurse in Atlanta, Georgia. Taylor posted a picture of himself wearing his old paramedic uniform shirt on his Instagram account, with a caption explaining that he'd found it during a sort-out:

'A folded uniform shirt, still ringed with dirt and sweat around the collar. In the pockets were faded **EKG** strips, a couple of syringes, some long-since dried up alcohol prep pads and a pair of tattered gloves. The top was adorned with my badges of service – the only things I have ever kept from my past. [They] have seen more sweat, long sighs, blood, held-back tears, late-night

delirious laughter with my partners and crews, tragedies, deaths, even a few births, unimaginable heaps of teamwork, total long shots and true miracles than I'll ever be able to recall.

'I decided to wash the uniform, try it on (still fits!) and hang it in the far corner of my closet – a reminder of why I went into this field in the first place, all those years ago: when things are dark and scary and heavy and full of gloom, the only real treasure we have is each other, and with that comes the responsibility to reach out, to help those in need, and do our own parts to the absolute best of our abilities. Those long nights on the ambulance put me through some of the most challenging experiences of my life, but

I would never trade the MEMORIES or the RELATIONSHIPS, and I would do it all again in a heartbeat.'

OLAMIDE OREKUNRIN

British-born Olamide was in the middle of her studies to become a doctor when her little sister fell ill while travelling with relatives in Nigeria. Olamide and her family were shocked to discover that there was no air ambulance service in the whole region, and tragically her sister died as they couldn't get her the care she needed. This terrible event made Olamide determined to create real change, and she went on to set up Flying Doctors Nigeria, the first air ambulance service in West Africa.



BRYNN BELL

Brynn has worked as a nurse in an outpatient office in New York for many years, but during the pandemic in April 2020, she was transferred to work with COVID-19 patients. 'Overnight I found out that I'd be getting training, and the next day I was on the floor working with patients.'

Within a couple of weeks she went from her normal office-based job to the ward, to then looking after patients on journeys within and outside hospital. 'COVID-19 patients need their oxygen levels to be monitored constantly, especially during transport when they are not able to have family or friends with them and might feel more nervous. The people doing the transport aren't medically trained, so my role has developed in these pandemic times. I get a

report every day to say how many lives have been saved through this job.'

It's difficult work. 'Many patients are anxious; they're scared because they can't breathe.

'You have to be a CALMING influence. I try to SMILE and speak words of encouragement to them.

'I have met so many interesting people along the way, and made connections I never would have expected to make before. And humour is very healing – we try to laugh as much as possible. There's one transporter I work with who could be a comedian; he does a great Shrek impression!'

DEFINITIONS

CANNULA: a thin tube inserted into the body to administer medicine, drain fluid or introduce a surgical instrument

EKG OR ECG: a machine for measuring electrical signals from the heart, which it prints on strips of paper

INTUBATION: the insertion of a thin tube into the body, particularly for ventilation (help with breathing)

RESUSCITATION: reviving someone from unconsciousness

WINCH: using a device to lift someone on to a helicopter