

## **Lufthansa medical Service**

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Lufthansa offers all patients an all-embracing, tailor made service. So should the need arise, special support can be made available at the airport, e.g. to help the patient to get on board.

### **Patient Transport Compartment**

With its Patient Transport Compartment (PTC), Lufthansa offers a solution for the transport and intensive medical care of critically-ill patients on long-haul flights that has been systematically developed and perfected since 1996.

The PTC is a closed space unit specially developed for this purpose. As a result, the private sphere is preserved and consistent intensive medical care of the patient made possible.

As an independent fully-functional space unit, when required the PTC can be installed in wide-bodied aircraft like the B 747-400 and the A 340/ A 330 fleet during routine time spent on the ground in Frankfurt. Measuring 6 square metres and with normal standing height, in comparison to an ambulance aircraft, the PTC offers plenty of space for the treatment of patients.

In addition to the patient bed, the compartment contains two seats for the medical crew, intensive care equipment, 13,000 litres of oxygen and the required consumable materials and drugs.

### **Logistics**

Since spring 2004, the PTC has been flying not only to the B 747 destinations, but also on all intercontinental flights that are flown by the new A-340-300/600 fleet. Thus the number of destinations that can be reached directly with the PTC system has increased from 25 to more than 70 worldwide.

In the event of an inquiry for the PTC system, approx. 30 minutes time is required for checking the system, in order to provide an approval. The PTC transport is handled on the basis of a priority system, irrespective of the capacity utilization of the flight. In order to guarantee smooth repatriation, the chronological course of the flight is discussed in advance together with the customer. This includes transport to and from the airport. Here, precise planning is very important as the planned flight routine of a schedule flight should not be affected by a PTC tour.

After the commissioning of the transport order and the immediate operative preparation, on day 1, as a rule, the medical crew sets off from Frankfurt to travel to the patient. It is made up of the doctor provided by the customer and the Lufthansa PTC Escort. The PTC Escort is a male or female flight attendant with training as an

intensive care nurse/paramedic. In addition to providing medical assistance, he/she is responsible for the safety and coordination of the PTC Transport. Thus, the doctor has an experienced assistant by his side, enabling him to concentrate exclusively on the medical care of the patient.

On arrival at the destination there are usually at least 24 hours before the return flight. The doctor takes a look at the patient's documents and examines the patient in order to assess his/her transportability. All the other preparatory work is completed during this time.

If the patient is not fit for transportation at this time, there is still time to stop the installation of the PTC in Frankfurt. It is thus possible to avoid the main cost element in the event of a cancellation or a temporal delay without the PTC being used. In this case, together with the customer, Lufthansa will discuss what alternatives are then realizable. That could mean: later use of the PTC or the return of the medical crew without the patient.

In order to guarantee that the flight with the PTC is conducted on time and all waiting time for the patient is avoided, the flight can be registered with a high priority with the Central Flow Management Unit (CMU) in Brussels.

Thanks to the well-coordinated logistics it is guaranteed that the patient can be brought on board without problems and a reciprocal impairment of passenger and medical transport does not occur. In the normal case, the patient is back home about two and a half days after the medical crew departs on its mission.

The transfer at all airports is conducted, on principle, by Lufthansa. In Frankfurt a special ambulance highloader is available. At other stations use is made of a catering vehicle. This is safer and simpler than bringing the patient aboard via the aircraft's steps. If the patient is to be further transported by rescue helicopter or ambulance aircraft, provisions can be made in advance for the Lufthansa aircraft and the other aircraft to be positioned immediately next to each other. This ensures an immediate transfer of the patient.

The total transport time must be kept to the absolutely necessary minimum. The PTC system fulfils this precondition, it facilitates a shortening of the transport time by up to 50%.

Another important factor is the price of the intensive care transport. Included in the PTC price is a B-Class ticket for the accompanying doctor from or to the patient, the medical equipment in accordance with the requirements for intensive care transport, drugs as well as medical consumable materials plus the PTC Escort.

The price comparison is clearly in favour of the scheduled flight. The difference compared to an ambulance flight is so substantial that the difference not only covers the feeder and collection flights but, in addition, also produces a clear cost advantage for the scheduled flight. With clear economic, operative and medical advantages on long-haul routes, the PTC is less a competing product, but rather a meaningful alternative to the ambulance aircraft with a very specific performance profile.