

EN ROUTE CARE TRAINING

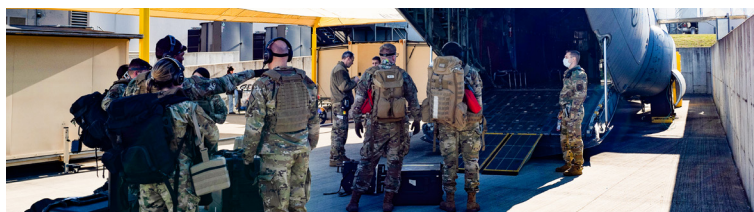
U.S. AIR FORCE SCHOOL OF AEROSPACE MEDICINE

ABOUT EN ROUTE CARE

The En Route Care Training Department in the United States Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, or USAFSAM, trains medical personnel across the Department of Defense to transport and deliver care to warfighters all over the world. USAFSAM is part of the Air Force Research Laboratory's 711th Human Performance Wing.

While instructors use traditional training methods such as classroom lectures in their courses, the emphasis is on more immersive, simulated environments. For Flight Nurse, Aeromedical Evacuation Technician, and Critical Care Air Transport courses, instructors use training scenarios paired with fuselage trainers -- including the C-17, C-130, 767, Black Hawk helicopter, KC-135 and KC-46 -- that create an environment so realistic deployed en route care medical personnel feel like they've been there before. Everything that could be used by an operational crew on a real aircraft is available in the trainers. As they tend to high-fidelity patient manikins -- which, talk, bleed, and respond to medical intervention -- students experience simulated smoke, fires, emergency signals, and sounds such as explosions. Care in the air is clearly an environment much different than a traditional hospital or emergency room.

But students don't just train to work in the back of an airplane. This department also offers Ground Surgical Team courses -- training elite Ground Surgical Teams on how to provide ground intervention and sustainment care in austere environments before patients are moved to larger facilities to be evacuated. Aircraft capabilities and fancy equipment are only one side of this environment. For every single course, instructors re-create every scenario that students might experience with patients. This includes extensive research to provide the latest in medical simulation technologies, which enhances realism and places students in the most immersive environment as possible.



Students participate in en route care training at the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine. Photos by Keith Lewis

Established under the Air Force Research Laboratory, the 711th Human Performance Wing (711 HPW) is comprised of the Human Effectiveness Directorate and USAFSAM. The Wing's mission is to ensure air and space forces are supported today and ready for tomorrow's conflict, and that Air Force medics are ready to care for those forces. By working to enable, enhance, sustain, and restore Airmen and Guardians throughout their career lifecycle, the 711 HPW assures the warfighter's readiness to execute the operational mission in any environment.

USAFSAM is an internationally renowned center for aerospace medical learning, consultation, aerospace medical investigations, and aircrew health assessment. It promotes readiness and protects force and community health by using a range of tools and expertise including environmental & health surveillance, laboratory & risk analysis, process re-engineering, consultation, and technological innovation to maximize operational health capabilities. USAFSAM trains approximately 6,000 students each year.