TO:       Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Helicopter Air Ambulance Service: Reimbursement Amounts

ATTACHMENTS: None

PURPOSE

This memorandum is to serve as a reminder to district staff as to Medicaid reimbursement amounts for helicopter air ambulance services.

BACKGROUND

A recent article in the Albany Times Union drew attention to the continued expansion of air ambulance service. The article referenced the emergence of a new air helicopter called "Albany Med Flight" which is a joint venture between Albany Medical Center and a private helicopter concern, Rocky Mountain Helicopter. The helicopter air ambulance service, which began February 26, 1996, will provide emergency rotary wing ambulance service to 25 counties in northeastern New York.
Current Medicaid reimbursement is outlined in Informational Letter 94 INF-6 dated January 31, 1994, "Air Ambulance Transportation for Medical Care". This letter states the following helicopter air ambulance reimbursement amounts:

- Lift-off from base: $200 (for all providers except LaSalle Mercy Flight)
- LaSalle Mercy Flight Lift-off from base: $100
- Patient Occupied Flight Time: $15 per minute

If you have any questions surrounding helicopter air ambulance services and Medicaid reimbursement policy, please contact Anne Reznikoff of the Medicaid Transportation Unit at 1-800 343-8859, ext. 35983, or Sperrylink user identification number AW7870.

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Richard T. Cody
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Health and Long Term Care