

# Beijing opens hospital helipad

A helipad for transferring patients in emergency cases was put into service on Aug 29 at a top hospital in downtown Beijing, which is often congested by traffic.

The helicopter apron, which is atop a newly built four-story car park at the China-Japan Friendship Hospital, is the only one specially for medical services in the capital's urban area that integrates aviation and land rescue.

Using the facility, the hospital will be able to cooperate much more frequently with emergency rescue centers to save patients in critical condition from more than 500 kilometers away, said Wang Chen, president of the hospital.

"Based on the experiences of developed countries, transferring patients by helicopter can increase their survival rate by 25 percent," he said.

The helipad, which has a diameter of 20 meters, is designed to handle helicopters up to 17 meters in length and with a maximum takeoff weight of 8 metric tons.

"We launched the facility to improve healthcare services, especially to facilitate patient transfers, which have been impeded due to heavy traffic congestion around the hospital," said Ying Jiaoqian, head of the hospital's medical affairs department.

Ying said there are a few hospitals in Beijing that are equipped with similar apron facilities, but the one at China-Japan Friendship Hospital is the only one in the central urban area.

She said a middle-aged man was flown from Shenyang, Liaoning province, to Beijing for medical treatment by helicopter on Wednesday, making him the first patient to benefit from the new facility.

The patient, who suffered multiple bone fractures after falling from a building, was first transported to the China-Japan Friendship Hospital in a flight that lasted under two hours and then sent by ambulance to Beijing Jishuitan Hospital, which specializes in bone injuries.

Ying said the patient, who paid for the transfer, is now in stable condition.

Hospitals around China have been urged to improve services for patients during the new round of medical reforms, aimed at universal coverage of healthcare services.

Most major public hospitals in Beijing have opened online or mobile registration services, so patients can make appointments using smartphones rather than having to wait in long lines in hospitals.

In October, 132 major hospitals in Beijing and neighboring Tianjin and Hebei province started to recognize 27 clinical test results, such as cholesterol level and hepatitis B, so patients do not have to pay for repeat testing at different hospitals, according to the Beijing Health and Family Planning Commission.