MercyOne Air Med demonstrated Be One, Personalize Care and Innovate on Feb. 28, when the team completed a first for our flight program and MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center – a flight transport of an ECMO patient.

Bradley Wilcox, DO, critical care pulmonologist, contacted the flight team on the possibility of transporting a patient, who was soon to be cannulated for ECMO, from MercyOne North Iowa to MercyOne Des Moines. Together, Dr. Wilcox, Kevin Devnich, manager of Perfusion at MercyOne Des Moines, and the flight team (involving Kendall Wood, flight paramedic; Matt Klein, flight nurse; and Joe Wahlig, pilot) discussed options available – flight or ground transport – and their approach to performing this transfer in the safest and most effective fashion possible. They determined they would request the assistance of our ground team by driving to Mason City – not delaying transport should that be the option selected – as the flight team and Kevin would proceed to Mason City via air. This provided the opportunity to expedite arrival to Mason City, assess the patient, initiate care, and communicate definitive plans for transport between the team and Dr. Wilcox.

Based on the clinical condition of the patient, the ability to secure equipment in the aircraft and, most importantly, the safety of the patient and personnel, the team determined they’d be able to successfully complete the return trip via air. MercyOne Des Moines Ambulance colleagues Ian Price, paramedic, and Naylor Ray, EMT, arrived at Mason City as the flight team was preparing the patient for transport, serving as an added resource of assistance while transporting the patient to the aircraft and safely securing both the patient and equipment for transport.

Congratulations, and thank you, to everyone at MercyOne Des Moines and MercyOne North Iowa who assisted in the process to complete the first ECMO transport via air ambulance!

What is ECMO?

ECMO is a form of life support in which an external artificial circulation system carries blood from a patient (via a centrifugal pump) to a gas exchange device (oxygenator). This allows the blood to be enriched with oxygen while carbon dioxide is simultaneously removed before the blood is returned back to the patient’s circulation.

ECMO is used as temporary support of heart and/or lung function for a reversible disease process. It creates an environment that allows the heart and lungs the time they need to potentially recover. Read more on ECMO by visiting MercyOne.org/desmoines.
Lab welcomes new client: Broadlawns Medical Center

MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory has acquired Broadlawns Medical Center as a client for clinical laboratory testing. MercyOne Des Moines will serve as Broadlawns’ primary laboratory for referring specimens for tests that Broadlawns does not perform onsite. Tests will gradually be transitioned to MercyOne as an interface is built and expanded to enable optimized test order entry and results delivery. We’re very excited to partner and support Broadlawns with our comprehensive reference laboratory test menu.

Learn more about MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory [here](#).

LVAD Cardiac Program: By the numbers

In 2014, MercyOne Iowa Heart Center introduced a new level of care to congestive heart failure (CHF) patients. A left ventricular assist device (LVAD) was implanted onto the heart of a patient to improve his heart’s pumping capability.

LVAD therapy is considered a “destination therapy,” which can improve quality of life or act as a bridge to heart transplantation. Since 2014:

- 51 patients served
- 45,051 days of life extended
- 4 patients transplanted
- 2 patients awaiting transplant

Learn more about CHF and LVAD therapy from Dr. Frances Johnson, MercyOne Iowa Heart Center advanced heart failure cardiologist, by listening to the Feb. 24 MercyOne “Your Best Life” podcast at [MercyOne.org/podcast](http://MercyOne.org/podcast), or by searching “MercyOne” on your favorite podcast player.