LifeFlight one of the few programs to carry blood products

(Anderson, S.C. – July 21, 2014) – With the help of technology tested in Afghan battlefields, LifeFlight’s emergency crew is equipped to use blood products to prevent a clotting disorder common in trauma cases and responsible for higher mortality rates.

AnMed Health LifeFlight became one of a handful of programs in the country to carry blood and fresh frozen plasma (FFP) on every call.

“Overall, the majority of trauma patients at a scene that requires LifeFlight will ultimately need multiple units of blood while in the Emergency Department or surgery,” said Paul Hubbard, director of LifeFlight. “Having blood or FFP with us at all times improves their chances of survival. It’s not easy to have a ready supply, though, and that’s why we’re one of only a few doing this.”

Keeping blood and FFP close, ready and safe is the responsibility of the flight team using a special cooler that was tested and used by the American military in Afghanistan. Each cooler has a device to monitor temperature and download the information to computers for documentation.

During each 12-hour shift, the cooler is assigned to a designated team member. At the end of 24 hours, the blood products are inventoried and replaced as needed to meet standards. The oversight of this process is handled by the AnMed Health Blood Bank laboratory staff.

“It takes teamwork among people and departments to get it done, but we know it will be worth it when lives are saved,” Hubbard said.

###