

# YOUR SCAA

SCOTLAND'S LIFELINE, POWERED BY YOU



YOUR SUPPORT MEANT WE  
COULD BE THERE FOR RILEY:

**“I trusted them  
with my little  
boy – his life was  
in their hands.”**



SCOTLAND'S CHARITY AIR AMBULANCE

Winter 2026 | [scaa.org.uk](https://scaa.org.uk)

# Your donations meant Riley could be reached in time.



“I thought I was going to lose my little boy – he was purple and couldn’t breathe. I’ve never been so scared in all my life. Without Scotland’s Charity Air Ambulance, Riley might have died.”

Riley didn’t mean to swallow the £2 coin.

He just looked up while his aunt was teaching him to toss coins and the weighty disc dropped into his mouth and slid down his windpipe. So began a race against time as the youngster struggled for breath.

“I tried not to panic, the children needed me to be calm, but I was terrified,” said Riley’s mum Nicolle. “I saw Riley struggling to breathe and couldn’t help him. It was really frightening.”

Nicolle dialled 999. An ambulance arrived within minutes and told Nicolle they had to get him to hospital quickly – but not by road.

“We heard the helicopter coming in to land outside the house just as another SCAA paramedic arrived in a Rapid Response Vehicle,” explained Nicolle.

The coin had lodged itself at a 45-degree angle in Riley’s throat, allowing just enough space to get a little air through. Any movement, however, could have shifted it to completely choke the youngster.

Riley was walked slowly and carefully to the waiting helicopter, wearing an oxygen mask and being supported by the paramedics. Nicolle accompanied her son on the flight.



“Throughout the entire emergency, these young paramedics were focused on Riley – they weren’t going to let anything happen to him,” said Nicolle. “I trusted them with my little boy – his life was in their hands.”

Clutching a SCAA teddy bear the crew had given him, Riley tried his best to listen to the paramedics’ instructions, but gag reflexes caused him to vomit blood several times.

“I was in total awe of the paramedics,” said Nicolle. “They never let up in their care and commitment to Riley – keeping him as still as possible, keeping him calm and monitoring him every step of the way.”

**“It was so reassuring to see their total control of the situation and their compassion for both Riley and me – his stressed-out mother.”**

Your generosity helped to fund Riley’s 10-minute flight to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary where he was taken into the resuscitation unit and then into theatre where surgeons were able to put him to sleep, slip a clamp down his throat and successfully capture the coin.

Riley’s parents, Nicolle and Gary, are in no doubt the speed of the helicopter and the professionalism of the crew saved their son’s life.

**“Without SCAA and the helicopter crew that day we could have lost Riley.”**

“Every breath could have been his last were he not in their hands – a road ambulance journey on bumpy roads could have spelled disaster and that doesn’t bear thinking about.”

The following day, Nicolle and Gary took Riley and their other two children to visit the SCAA crew in Aberdeen.

“It was extremely emotional to meet up with them and try to thank them for what they had done,” said Nicolle. “The previous day could have ended so differently and Gary and I could have faced life with two children instead of three.”

**Thanks to donations from people like you, SCAA was able to get to Riley in time. And with your continued support, we will reach more people in need when it matters most.**



# Welcome to your new life-saving helicopter...



Scotland's new state-of-the-art helicopter is in the air!

**Thanks to your donations, our customised helicopter is already proving a life-saver. No sooner had our H145 D3 gone online at its Aberdeen base than the crew was scrambled to attend its first emergency call out.**

Since launching on 1st October, SCAA's new Helimed 79 has now flown to help dozens of patients and airlifted those most seriously ill or injured to hospital care.

Thanks to you, we now have an air ambulance designed and equipped to meet the specific needs of our crew and patients in the demanding Scottish landscape – offering greater range, endurance and capacity.

The benefits to patients and clinicians are echoed by North of Scotland Trauma Network Clinical Lead and EMRS consultant Dr Donna Paterson.

“Prompt medical assessment and treatment are essential for both trauma and medical emergencies,” she said. “Rapid response by experts and swift patient transfer to definitive



care significantly improve survival rates and long-term recovery prospects.”

This new helicopter air ambulance will cost an additional £2 million to keep flying hope, help and healing to communities throughout Scotland. And your continued support will underpin our ambition that no one in Scotland should die because help can't get there in time.

Because of you, help will arrive this winter – and beyond – when life hangs in the balance. Your support fuels the flights that carry this aircraft and crew to people in their darkest hours.

# ...and farewell to a faithful friend.

**And as the country's newest air ambulance took to the skies, SCAA bid an emotional farewell to our Perth-based helicopter which has helped thousands of families throughout Scotland over the past 10 years thanks to your support.**

The charity's EC135 T2i, G-SCAA, made a ceremonial flypast of its home airfield when it headed out of Perth Airport for the final time, as staff and current and former crew acknowledged its departure.

Funded by the people of Scotland, G-SCAA responded to more than 3,000 call outs, flew the equivalent of more than 10 times round the world and took to the air for nearly 3,300 hours as it airlifted life-saving crews to those most seriously ill and injured across Scotland.

Thousands of lives have been saved or improved by the work of G-SCAA and SCAA Chief Executive David Craig said its departure stirred “mixed emotions”.

“It is terrific that SCAA has been supported by the public to the level that we are able to

upgrade our aircraft, but it's always sad to see an old friend leave.

“G-SCAA is a proven lifesaver. She's taken on the very worst weather and terrain that Scotland presents and, with skilled pilots, got our crews through to those in need time and time again.

“This helicopter has embedded itself in the hearts of thousands of patients who owe so much to its capabilities and the determination of the many crews who have served on it throughout its 10 years at Perth with SCAA,” added David.

Thanks to your ongoing generosity, G-SCAA has now been replaced by an upgraded H135 T2e, G-PSCA, complete with night vision capability, to take up the role at Perth.



# Thanks to you, SCAA was there when Fin needed help.



“I somehow managed to fall awkwardly and heard a cracking sound from my right leg – I realised I’d broken it just at the top of my boot.”

Fin was skiing down a familiar off-piste run in Glenshee when things took a turn for the worse. Despite having skied the same route ‘hundreds’ of times before, a seemingly innocuous turn rendered him immobile on the side of the mountain by himself.

“At first, I was in denial,” Fin explains, “I thought I had imagined it or that it was just muscular. But as I skied down six feet, I heard another cracking sound, and I fell. There was movement where there shouldn’t be movement, and I knew my leg was broken.”



With no mobile signal, Fin was left to wait in the snow and hope fellow skiers would appear. Fortunately, he managed to summon help and was transported to the first aid hut.

Fin, who lives in Arbroath, admits the pain was growing to excruciating levels, despite being administered with gas and air relief.

“The pain was getting progressively worse,” he explains. “I knew the road to Ninewells or Aberdeen Royal Infirmary would take a long time and be a tough route.

“So, when I heard that Scotland’s Charity Air Ambulance was coming to help, I was relieved knowing that I would have a smoother journey and get the medical help I needed in the quickest time.”

SCAA’s Helimed 76 helicopter based in Perth is the closest air ambulance to respond to incidents at Glenshee. However, on this occasion, the crew were thwarted from flying to this mission due to unsafe weather conditions on the southern side of the Cairngorms. Thankfully, SCAA’s Helimed 79 air ambulance based in Aberdeen was available. Our skilled pilot and two paramedics managed to reach Fin despite also facing challenging weather en route.

Your donations meant that SCAA got there in time, with Fin carefully packaged into the aircraft after receiving suitable pain relief and transferred to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in under 20 minutes.

**“Having SCAA there to transfer me to hospital in under 20 minutes made a world of difference.”**

A doctor confirmed Fin had fractured his ankle and right tibia in two places. He was kept in overnight and a full leg cast was applied.

“The crew made me feel at ease and they always conducted themselves professionally. I can’t thank the two paramedics and pilot enough for the care and support given to me that day,” he said.

Thanks to your support, our crew were able to reach Fin and provide him with the expert care he desperately needed. Accidents like these – even a simple trip or fall – can leave people in desperate need of vital medical care. Thanks to you and people all over Scotland, we’re able to be there when people need help.



# Mission Snapshots

Some of the recent life-saving missions across Scotland you've funded



## 1 - Kinloch Hourn

SCAA was the only emergency resource at the scene of a medical emergency at remote Loch Hourn in northwest Scotland. Our Perth-based helicopter took around 45 minutes to reach the area allowing paramedics to treat the patient at scene.



## 2 - Ben Lawers

SCAA overcame challenging weather to land near the summit of Ben Lawers where a schoolboy was injured in a fall. The youngster, suffering leg injuries, was flown to Ninewells Hospital – a 25-minute flight away versus a two-hour carry off the hill and a 90-minute road journey.



## 3 - Newtonmore

SCAA was quickly on scene when a woman was trampled by several cows while walking near Newtonmore. SCAA airlifted the patient, suffering multiple injuries, to the Major Trauma Centre in Aberdeen in half-an-hour – a journey that would take over two hours by road.



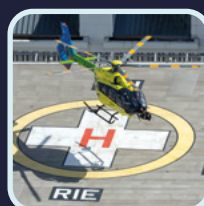
## 4 - Mull & Islay

SCAA flew to Mull to airlift a woman requiring urgent mainland hospital care. The patient was safely flown to hospital in Oban, with our crew then being tasked to Islay for the urgent airlift of a little girl to hospital in Glasgow.



## 5 - Elgin

SCAA airlifted an 11-year-old boy to hospital care following a motocross accident near Elgin. The youngster was flown to the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital in under 25 minutes, saving a road journey of an hour and a half.



## 6 - Innerleithen

SCAA flew to Innerleithen to help a man who suffered leg injuries while trail biking. Working with Tweed Valley Mountain Rescue to carry the injured man through difficult terrain to our helicopter, the patient was then airlifted to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in just 10 minutes.

Please follow us on socials and, if you can, donate to help us get there, **in time.**

