Students from the Emergency Medicine Interest Group enjoyed a hands-on tour of the Beaumont One air medical transportation helicopter. The group met Beaumont One crew members – flight nurses and flight paramedics – who demonstrated how they manage the care of critically ill patients as they fly more than 140 miles per hour in a the American Eurocopter EC-145 helicopter.

The students walked through the helicopter that was in its hangar in Troy, Mich. They even had the opportunity to sit in the pilot’s seat and find out that equipment – like night vision goggles, overwater flight modifications, and instrument landing system (ILS) – allows pilots to fly Beaumont One in many conditions except for freezing rain.

"Talking to the Beaumont One crewmembers helped us understand the additional capabilities they have to manage the critically ill, including managing patients that a standard ambulance could not safely transport," said Brian Malley, the president of the Emergency Medicine Interest Group. "For example, the crews on these flights are able to place chest tubes, take patients with intra-aortic balloon pumps (IABPs) in place, and manage a wide variety of complex medication infusions."

The crewmembers shared a checklist with the students describing how physicians assist them in caring for their patients. It included identifying patients who would and would not likely benefit from helicopter transport and highlighting the details to convey to the dispatcher when calling for a helicopter.

"We appreciated the examples and pointers about the important information that we should cover when giving a turnover report to an air medical crew," said Malley. "They were incredibly gracious in giving so much of their time."

Overall, the visit gave the students a better understanding of the air medical resources and professionals that will be available to them when they are physicians.

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