

## **Spright and Interpath Laboratory Launch Medical Drone Delivery Pilot Service**

*First-of-its-kind drone delivery network to increase speed and efficiency of specimen delivery to the lab.*

**DENVER: February 22, 2022** – [Spright](#), the drone division of Air Methods, announced today that it has partnered with [Interpath Laboratory](#) to launch a first-of-its-kind drone delivery network that will transfer lab specimens. The first proof-of-concept test flight was last week with the [Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center](#) to Interpath's main medical laboratory location in Pendleton, OR.

The proof-of-concept initiative is expected to greatly reduce the turnaround time of critical diagnostic test results for clinics like Yellowhawk and Interpath patients, while also improving patient satisfaction, and enabling healthcare providers to implement follow-up care in a timelier manner.

The project, working with [Pendleton UAS Test Site](#) team, will use a Wingcopter 198 drone leveraging beyond line of sight (BVLOS) technology to perform the 15-mile flight from Yellowhawk to Interpath's clinical laboratory in Pendleton.

The current process for laboratory services takes patient samples throughout the day, then batches them together for pick-up by gasoline-powered vehicles in the evening for delivery to Interpath. These vehicles typically drive thousands of miles each day across the region to pick-up specimens from numerous clinics, hospitals and facilities.

In contrast, the new drone-delivery initiative will enable samples to be repeatedly picked up and delivered to Interpath throughout the day, providing a green solution that removes gasoline-powered vehicles from roads and lessens local traffic.

"Many communities located in remote or rural areas lack timely and convenient access to essential medical supplies and service," said Joe Resnik, president of Spright. "We look forward to this proof-of-concept, showcasing drone delivery's ability to solve many of healthcare's existing access and efficiency challenges, while also improving patient care and experience."

If successful, this new approach will allow Interpath Laboratory to transport patient samples throughout the day, rather than primarily overnight. Maximizing daytime sample processing abilities will lead to more efficient laboratory operations, while benefiting patients and healthcare providers with faster delivery of vital test results.

"Medical laboratory services in rural areas frequently must invest intensive time and resources into sample pick-up," said Tom Kennedy, President, Interpath Laboratory. "We anticipate Spright's drone delivery service will alleviate many of the drawbacks and costs associated with automobile-based delivery. This initiative represents an example of our embrace of innovative solutions that provide more efficient and effective services to our clients."

Rural healthcare has faced many challenges over the years. But innovative new approaches such as Interpath's desire to explore new avenues to expand healthcare access is helping rural and Tribal healthcare leaders to make terrific advancements for their patients and the broader communities they serve.

"If this pilot program is successful and we are able to utilize this service, our patients have the opportunity to benefit from more rapid test results and access follow-up medical procedures and

services,” said Aaron Hines, CEO of Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center. “This project could help us further our mission of providing high-quality, primary healthcare for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR).”

### **About Spright**

[Spright](#) is the drone division of Air Methods, created to help solve for many of the toughest challenges facing communities across North America. This innovative, drone-based solution is tasked with leveraging emerging aeronautical technology to create operational solutions that can be implemented locally. Based in Gilbert, AZ, Spright as a stand-alone Part 135 Operator with a leadership team that touts more than 70 years of aviation operational experience.

### **About Interpath Laboratory**

Interpath Laboratory is an independent full-service medical laboratory in the Pacific Northwest. Founded in 1967 the lab provide services to physicians, hospitals, government facilities and their patients. We employ approximately 1,000 people in OR, WA, and ID. Our extensive history in the laboratory industry has given us confidence to know and understand what is important to our clients. We operate our laboratories with providers and patients best interests in mind and pride ourselves in developing a relationship of trust and confidence with each client and their staff. We incorporate the latest technology in instrumentation and have developed fully automated lines for the most efficient flow of specimens.

### **About Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center**

Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center is owned and operated by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. It provides primary healthcare and additional services to more than 3,000 American Indian/Alaska Native patients.

Yellowhawk Vision: Our Tribal community achieves optimal health through a culture of wellness.

Yellowhawk Mission: It is our mission to empower our Tribal community with opportunities to learn and experience healthy lifestyle.

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