

Managing Aviation emergencies

Dr Ben Johnston

Aviation and Occupational Health, Airline Operations and People Safety, Air New Zealand, Auckland, New Zealand

Anaesthetists are trained and experienced in managing a range of medical emergencies and are ideally suited to volunteer assistance during a medical emergency on board an airline flight. However an airline passenger cabin is an unfamiliar working environment for doctors; when you hear the crew page "Is there a doctor on board?" it is likely several questions will be running through your head. What kinds of problems can I expect to encounter in an airline cabin? What is my liability if things go wrong? What equipment and drugs are available to me? What is my role in decision making about aircraft diversions?

This presentation will answer these questions from the perspective of international airlines. The session will also briefly discuss prevention of in-flight medical events, with a focus on decision making around fitness to fly following short-stay surgical procedures.