Beat: Travel

Pilot Suffers Mid-Flight Medical Emergency

Air Canada Flight Diverts to Boston

Halifax, Nova Scotia, 25.06.2026, 11:40 Time

USPA NEWS - An Air Canada flight from New Jersey to Halifax was diverted to Boston for an emergency landing after a pilot was unresponsive due to a medical emergency.

Air Canada Flight AC7664, operated by PAL Airlines, was en route from Newark, New Jersey, to Halifax, Nova Scotia, on Wednesday with 61 passengers on board when the captain suddenly became incapacitated.

According to passenger Rodney McDonald, the aircraft unexpectedly swerved several times in flight.

"The moment the plane swerved, I knew something was wrong because it was not turbulence," he recalled. "It really felt like someone had jerked the controls."

A flight attendant promptly entered the cockpit and exited with the captain, who seemed to be suffering from a seizure. McDonald and several other passengers helped to restrain the pilot while a registered nurse onboard offered medical aid and the cabin crew skillfully handled the situation.

The first officer of the aircraft promptly assumed full control of the De Havilland Dash 8 Q400 and safely diverted the flight to Boston Logan International Airport. Emergency responders were waiting on the ground, and the captain was transported to a local hospital for medical treatment.

Passengers recounted the next 40 minutes as an inspiring display of teamwork as they collaborated to ensure the captain's safety while the aircraft continued toward Boston. McDonald spoke of the exceptional professionalism of everyone involved, particularly the flight attendants and first officer. "The flight attendants were truly exceptional, remaining calm and composed. We're deeply grateful for the positive outcome."

Air Canada subsequently confirmed that the diversion was consistent with established safety protocols, underscoring that airline pilots receive training to safely operate and land the aircraft in the event of a pilot incapacitation. The airline also arranged for onward transportation for passengers to Halifax.

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