



Ambulance

For people who live and work in the capital

Autumn 2010

Telephone treatment

Caring for patients without attending them

Page 2



Emergency planning

Preparing for major incidents

Page 3



Pedal power

THE Service's pioneering cycle response unit has celebrated its 10th birthday.

First trialled in July 2000 in the West End, bicycle ambulances now operate at Heathrow Airport, in the City of London and in areas such as Canary Wharf, Hammersmith, St Pancras and Kensington.

The idea of responding to 999 calls on bikes was the brainchild of Tom Lynch, a former BMX champion.

He carried out the first traffic-beating trial in central

London and has gone on to oversee the development of a full team of more than 50 cycle responders who have become a familiar sight across the capital.

It is estimated that in the last decade staff have ridden over 400,000 miles and cared for more than 50,000 patients – including a number whose lives were saved after being

resuscitated by a cycle responder.

Tom, who was awarded an MBE in 2007 for services to cycling, said: "While the equipment, training and bicycles have evolved over the years, the basic purpose of cycle responders remains the same - getting life-saving care to patients as quickly as possible.

"We have the benefit of being able to deal with around half the calls we respond to without needing an ambulance crew to

attend, so freeing them up to treat other patients."

"The purpose stays the same – getting life-saving care to patients as quickly as possible."

The unit has attracted interest from all over the world, with other emergency services using it as a model to develop similar teams in other big cities.



Photo by Tim Saunders

On patrol: Cycle responder Keith Plummer in Trafalgar Square

Inside

IN the fourth edition of Ambulance News learn about the Service's involvement at the Pride festival and other summer events, and how plans to respond to major incidents are tested.

There is also a chance to take part in a reader's survey about Ambulance News.

For the first time Ambulance News also includes the Annual Review.

Strong LINC

A STAFF support programme has been named runner-up in a national health competition.

The LINC scheme – short for Listening, Informal, Non-judgmental and Confidential – was praised by judges in the Healthcare People Management Awards for helping to tackle workplace stress.

More than 70 volunteers across the Service have been trained in basic counselling skills to offer support to their colleagues.

The latest figures show that the scheme has been used by nearly a fifth of staff.

Diary date

THE annual general meeting of the Trust Board will be held on Tuesday 28 September.

It is open to the public, and will begin at 2pm at the Service's headquarters at 220 Waterloo Road, SE1.

Anyone who wishes to attend is asked to contact Maureen Williams on 020 7783 2046.

Stay healthy, get vaccinated

LONDONERS who are at the greatest risk of getting flu this winter are being urged to get the seasonal flu jab.

The vaccination reduces the chances of catching the illness, and also means that the symptoms will be less severe if someone does get the flu virus.

Infection Prevention and Control Manager Trevor Hubbard said: "We would encourage everyone who can to get the vaccination to protect themselves and their families.

"Young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with underlying health conditions are all at a higher risk from flu, so anyone from these groups, or who has contact with them, should look to get the jab – which this year will also protect against swine flu.

"You can contact your GP for more information about a free vaccination."

All ambulance staff will

also be offered the seasonal flu jab from October.

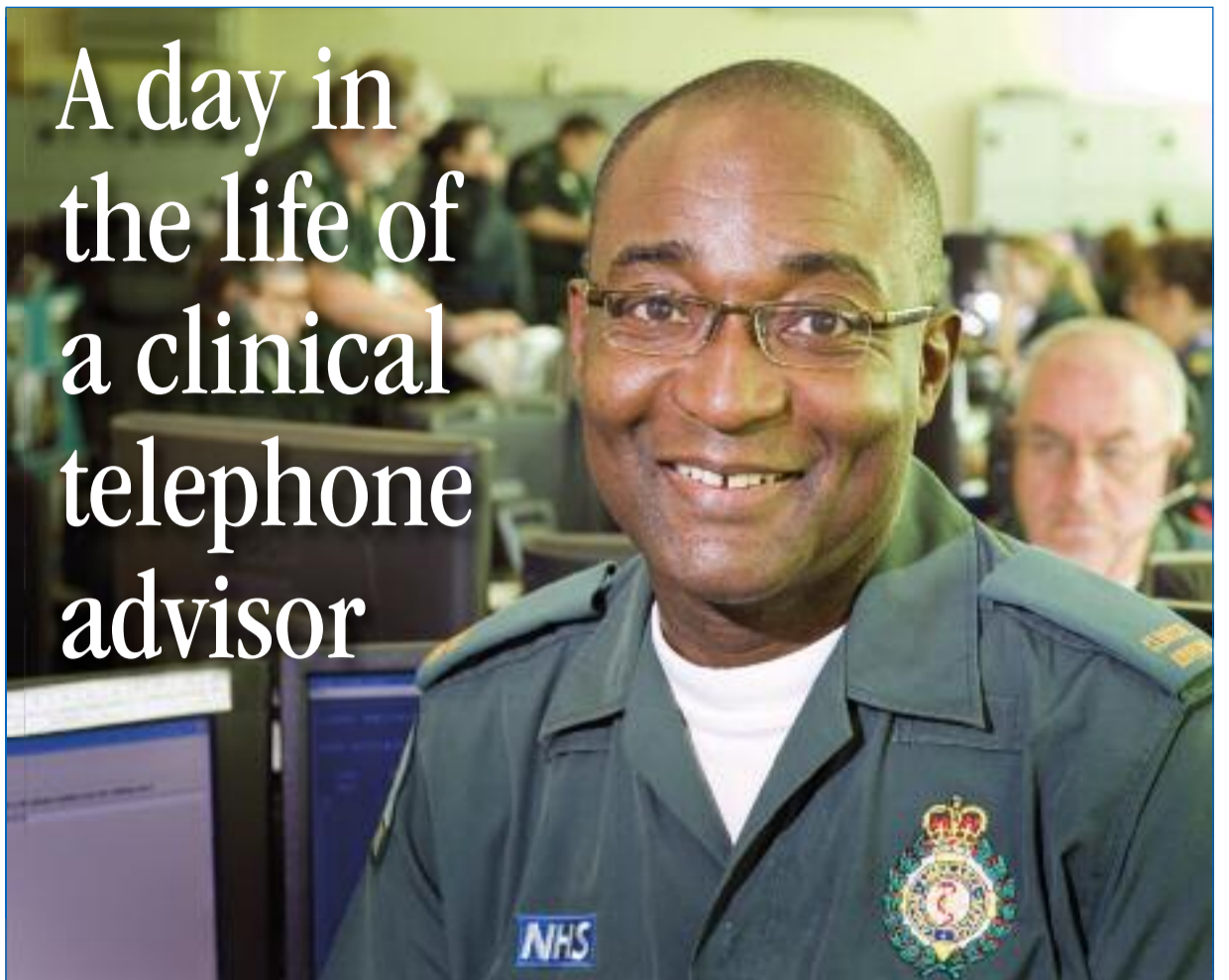
Trevor added: "By having the jab, our staff help to protect themselves, their families, and their patients. It also means that we can maintain our service to the public, and it relieves the pressure on their colleagues."

Flu facts

- The best time to get the jab is between late September and early November, ready for the winter.
- Flu reappears every winter, usually over a short period of a few weeks, so that a lot of people get ill around the same time.
- The flu jab will offer protection for about a year.

Source – www.nhs.uk

A day in the life of a clinical telephone advisor



MORE and more people who call 999 with illnesses or injuries that do not need to be treated in hospital are being offering medical advice over the phone rather than being sent an ambulance.

The clinical telephone advice team is made up of experienced emergency medical technicians and paramedics who can establish the best course of treatment for a patient with a minor condition – such as self-care at home or being referred to their local pharmacy, GP or walk-in centre.

Last year staff carried out more than 47,000 assessments over the phone and over a quarter of these patients did not need ambulance staff to attend them in person – helping to free up crews to treat people with more serious illnesses and injuries.

Clinical Telephone Advisor Terry Gibson (pictured) talks through some of the calls handled during a typical shift.

6:52AM A 40-year-old woman thinks she's got flu. She has a GP appointment at 9.30am and after an assessment I tell her that her symptoms are not life-threatening and suggest that she should keep her doctor's appointment.

7:27AM A man in his late 70s calls with a recurring condition. After an assessment I decide he needs an ambulance, but not an emergency response on blue lights.

10:09AM A woman calls for her four-year-old daughter who has got a piece of jewellery stuck in her ear. She can't get it out, but the child doesn't need an ambulance. I give her appropriate advice and she decides to go to her nearest walk-in centre.

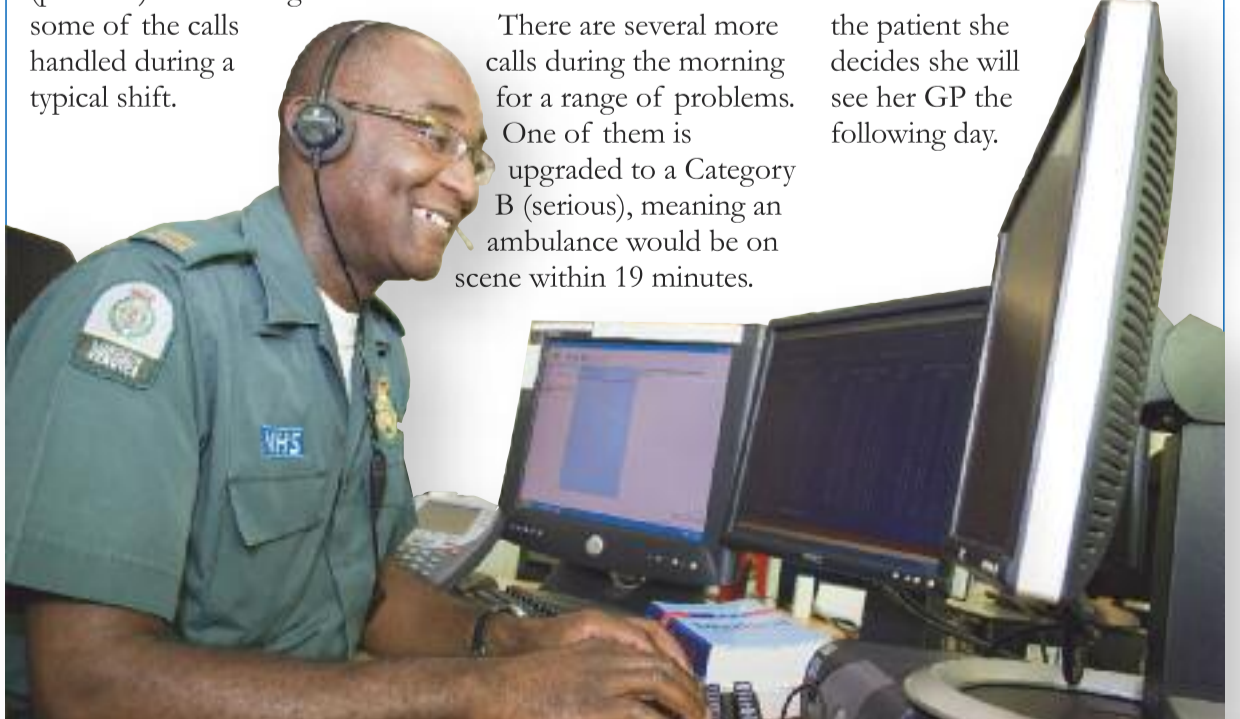
The benefit of clinical telephone advice is that we can respond in a way that best suits the patient's needs.

There are several more calls during the morning for a range of problems. One of them is upgraded to a Category B (serious), meaning an ambulance would be on scene within 19 minutes.

Although patients get transferred to us so we can give them medical help over the phone, we can still send ambulances if they are needed.

1:03PM Another call from a mum, this time for a 12-year-old girl who has had abdominal pain for a week. Her GP said her appendix was 'grumbling' and told them to seek medical attention if it continued. She's called us because her daughter was sent home from school today, and the pain is now so bad it's difficult to move. This call needs an ambulance because of the associated risks of a burst appendix.

4:47PM This call is for a woman in her 30s with back pain which has been coming and going since she moved house at the weekend. The lady is at work and the company first-aider has called us for advice. After a discussion with the patient she decides she will see her GP the following day.



Design an ambulance of the future

We are inviting people to take part in the evaluation of a prototype ambulance, designed to improve the experience of patients and to provide a 21st century space for treatment.

Everyone is welcome at this open forum event, where you can take part in an interactive session including a mock-up interior and a virtual ambulance.

Dates: 23 and 24 September from 10am – 4pm.

Please turn up at any time on either day.

Venue: The Royal College of Art, Helen Hamlyn Centre, Kensington Gore, London SW7 2EU.



There is also an opportunity for a couple of our members to take part in a more detailed evaluation on 27 September.

If you would like to take part or have any queries, please contact the membership office:

Freephone: 0800 7311 388

Email: membership@londonambulance.nhs.uk

Preparing for the unexpected

FROM a call to respond to last-minute protest marches to supporting the detailed preparations for the 2012 Games, it is all part of the work of the emergency preparedness team.

Being ready to support some of the biggest annual events in the London calendar – such as the Notting Hill Carnival and New Year's Eve celebrations – takes many months of planning.

The Service has the responsibility to make sure that there is medical cover for everyone who wants to attend, which means ensuring that staff are positioned in the best possible locations to get access to patients and that any potential risks are identified and minimised.

The team also develops plans for responding to major incidents like terrorist attacks, train collisions, large fires, and any scenario with the potential



Good practice: A 'patient' being treated during Exercise Milo

for lots of patients.

To keep up to date, staff work with colleagues from the police, fire brigade and other health organisations and regularly take part in planning exercises and mock events to

put plans to the test.

An example is Exercise Milo, which was held in June and centred around two minibuses crashing into a lorry of chemicals during a sporting event for disabled athletes.

Over 600 people were involved in the exercise, including 70 Service staff. The 'patients' were all actors – many with disabilities and some with prosthetic limbs.

During the event, the Service's hazardous area response team wore protective suits when assessing the patients before taking them to decontamination tents. Once there, the casualties were rinsed in warm water and then cleaned with soap before being rinsed again and taken through to a clearing area where a further clinical assessment was made.

Emergency Planning Advisor Garry Phillips said: "It was a very challenging scenario as we haven't worked with a large number of patients with different disabilities in this way before. Overall, it went very well and was a great example of multi-agency working."

InBrief

TA says thanks



THE Territorial Army has presented the Service with a work of art, to say thank you for supporting its efforts overseas.

Colonel Gilbert from 256 (City of London) Field Hospital handed over the print of an injured soldier being treated to Chief Executive Peter Bradley and Director of Operations Richard Webber.

Emergency Care Practitioner Ayodele Adebisi and Emergency Medical Technician Jess Smith, who have both spent time with their TA regiments in Iraq and Afghanistan, were also on hand to accept the gift.

Frequent caller gets ASBO

A WOMAN who called for an ambulance more than 500 times in a year has been served with an anti-social behaviour order.

Highgate Magistrates' Court issued the woman, from Tottenham, with a two-year ban on making unnecessary calls to the emergency services.

Patient Experiences Officer Angela Riches said: "We have been working with local health and social care services for the past couple of years to try and find a way to reduce the number of calls.

"Sadly, despite all of our best efforts they continued and this has been a reluctant last resort."

Awarded and rewarded

GLAMOUR was the order of the night as staff got together to recognise the work of their colleagues.

The Service's awards evening in June saw 15 people singled out for their hard work and professionalism, after they were shortlisted from more than 170 nominations made by fellow staff members.

Over 250 people attended the event in central London, including a number of former patients who presented the awards.

Service goes out on show

AMBULANCE staff have been busy throughout the summer at events across the capital.

From the Wimbledon tennis championships to pop and rock concerts and the Hampton Court Flower Show, the Service has had a role to play in ensuring the safety of visitors and spectators.

Staff have also been out and about to promote the work of the organisation and the importance of knowing what to do in an emergency.

This included a stand at the Mayor's Newham Show in east London, which was attended by nearly 50,000 people.

Emergency Medical Technician Ruth Lewis said: "We had a lot of visitors and everyone was very positive about the Service and learning to save lives.

"We showed people how to recognise if someone is suffering a cardiac arrest, that is their heart has stopped beating and they've

stopped breathing."

Meanwhile, the Service's presence at this year's Pride festival was bigger and more colourful than ever.

Over 40 staff and representatives from MERU, the Chief Executive's charity, marched through the streets of London.

All smiles: Staff at the Mayor's Newham Show (right) and Pride festival



Triathlon triumph



In the saddle: Ben and Ewan during the race

AN EMERGENCY medical technician completed a triathlon with a difference – pulling, towing and pushing his toddler son all the way around the course.

Ben Laws, who is based at Battersea ambulance station, undertook the challenge to raise money for three good

causes, including the Chief Executive's charity, MERU.

Ben's two-year-old son Ewan has cerebral palsy and MERU made a special seating system for him so he could take part.

It took the duo seven hours and 38 minutes to complete the 1.9km swim,

92km cycle ride and 21km run.

Ben said: "It was incredible and the support from everyone was amazing. It was a very special feeling racing with a very special little boy. Ewan had a blast and got his own medal."

More information can be found at www.teamlaws.co.uk

How to contact us

In an emergency

Call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured.

Examples of medical emergencies include (but are not limited to) chest pain, difficulty in breathing, unconsciousness, severe loss of blood, serious injuries and choking.



About the care you have received

Our patient experiences team is your first point of contact if you have any comments, feedback or complaints about the service you have received from us. Call the team on 020 3069 0240 (9.30am - 4.30pm, Monday to Friday) or email patientexperiences@londonambulance.nhs.uk

About membership

We always welcome new members. If you would like to speak to someone about membership or update your details, please contact the membership office on 0800 7311 388 or email membership@londonambulance.nhs.uk

About Ambulance News

If there are any stories or issues you would like to read about, please call us on 020 7783 2286 or email communications@londonambulance.nhs.uk

www.londonambulance.nhs.uk

Your views on Ambulance News



Ambulance News is your newspaper, and we would like to know what you think about it and how it could be improved.

Please fill in this survey and send it back to us for free using the address provided. Or you can fill it in on our website at www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/survey. The closing date is 31 October 2010.

How did you obtain this copy of Ambulance News? (tick one only)

- By post
- At a GP surgery
- Email link to website
- Saw it on website
- Other (please state)

What stories do you like? (Please tick all that apply)

- News about service changes (eg new stroke and trauma services)
- Health advice and adverts
- 'InBrief' stories
- 'Day in the life' features
- Stories about staff
- Other (please state)

Overall, how would you rate Ambulance News?

- Very interesting
- Interesting
- Not very interesting
- Not at all interesting

How useful is this newspaper in helping you to understand more about the work of your ambulance service?

- Very useful
- Useful
- Not very useful
- Not at all useful

Is there anything else you would like to see in it, or do you have any other comments about it?

ABOUT YOU

We would like to learn more about our readers. Please help by providing the following information:

Gender: Male Female

Age: Under 18 18-24
 25-34 35-44
 45-54 55-64 65+

Ethnicity:

White White British
 White Irish
 White other

Mixed White and Black Caribbean
 White and Black African
 White and Asian
 Other

Asian or Asian British Indian
 Pakistani
 Bangladeshi
 Other

Black or Black British Caribbean
 African
 Other

Other Chinese
 Other ethnic group

 (please state)

I'd rather not say

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes No

Are you: (tick one only)

- Member of staff
- Foundation trust member
- Member of the public
- Partner organisation
- Other (please state)

FOR OUR STAFF MEMBERS

How would you prefer to receive Ambulance News?

- Paper copy sent to home address
- Email link to document on website
- Other (please state)

Please return to

Freepost RSAE-JTEL-YURH,
 London Ambulance Service NHS Trust
 Foundation Trust Office
 220 Waterloo Road
 London
 SE1 8SD

