



# Ambulance

For people who live and work in the capital

Autumn 2011

## Riot response

Dealing with three nights of trouble in the capital

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Charity teams reach the finishing line in Mongolia

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# Heartening news

## InBrief

### Inquests prompt training review

CHANGES will be made to some of the training that staff receive about major incidents, following the findings of the London bombings inquests.

Coroner Lady Justice Hallett had formally recommended that the Service work with clinicians from London's Air Ambulance to look again at existing procedures, including how basic medical care can be provided during the process of initially assessing patients, known as triage.

The review has since been completed and it has been confirmed that all frontline staff will receive updated training over the next two years.

### Become a Facebook friend



THE Service is reaching out to people across London and beyond with its new Facebook page.

It can be found at [www.facebook.com/londonambulanceservice](http://www.facebook.com/londonambulanceservice)

### AGM invite

THE annual general meeting of the Trust Board will be held on Tuesday 27 September.

It is open to the public, and will begin at 2pm in the Robens Suite on the 29th floor of Guy's Hospital, SE1.

Anyone wishing to attend should telephone 020 7783 2046.



Success story: Pezo and Sam Benjamin with the ambulance staff who attended their emergency call

THE chances of surviving a cardiac arrest in London are better than ever, the Service's latest figures show.

A total of 259 patients whose hearts stopped beating at home or in public were resuscitated and discharged from hospital between April 2010 and March this year – 22 more than the previous year.

However, the statistics also reveal that bystanders only attempted the life-saving skills of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) – or chest compressions and rescue breaths – in just over a third of cases.

Medical Director Fionna Moore said: "Thanks to the hard work of our staff in

reaching patients quickly and providing an excellent level of care, the number of Londoners surviving an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest has gone up for the third consecutive year.

"However, it is important to emphasise that anyone who witnesses someone collapse and stop breathing can effectively save their life by calling 999 for an ambulance straight away and carrying out basic life support."

One person who did this was Sam Benjamin when his 31-year-old wife, Pezo, suffered a cardiac arrest in her sleep at home in Ilford in January.

Sam heard a noise and woke up thinking their four-month-old baby Yanis was ill, but

instead found that Pezo had stopped breathing.

He called 999 and following advice from one of the Service's call takers, started performing CPR.

When crews arrived, they shocked Pezo's heart three times with a defibrillator – a machine that delivers an electric shock to the heart – and her heartbeat returned. She has since been fitted with an internal cardioverter defibrillator implant, which monitors her heartbeat and will shock her automatically if it stops again.

The staff and hospital doctors agreed that Sam's actions had saved his wife's life.

Pezo said: "It made me

think that if he could do it without any experience in first aid, then just think what someone could do if they had some life-saving skills."

## Cardiac facts



- 68 per cent of cardiac arrests happen in the home
- The average age of a cardiac arrest patient is 68, with 64 per cent of them being men
- Cardiac arrests occur most frequently on a Monday

# A day in the life of Community involvement officers



HELPING to find the best way for people to get the right care is a top priority for community involvement officers.

There are currently five in post – based at Barnehurst, Chase Farm, Bromley, Greenwich and Camden and Islington complexes – with plans to introduce more.

Each has different priorities depending on the make-up of the community they work in; however,

they all play a vital role in public education and raising awareness of the Service.



## Patrick Brooks from Camden and Islington and Julie Carpenter from Barnehurst describe a typical day:



7.05AM

My shift starts at the ambulance station, where I talk to crews about the different options available to treat patients locally. For example, this can mean taking them to a minor injuries unit instead of hospital if they are not seriously injured.

the equipment we use, which should help reduce some of their fears should they or their carers ever need to call us.



1.30PM

Along with Camden Council, the police and the fire brigade, I am setting up a link to the 25,000 registered businesses in our area to make sure we have an easy way to pass information to them. This could be used if we need to get messages out during a major incident, or to help them deal with accidents in the workplace.



8.30AM

I have a meeting with police, a GP and social services among others about a vulnerable local person. We discuss their care needs and what can be put in place to help them and avoid services being used in the wrong way. In some cases, if a person's care package is not right they can ring for an ambulance up to 50 times a week.



2.30PM

My last meeting of the day is about the care of stroke patients. The other attendees include people from different health organisations and a patient, and we discuss what community services we have in Bexley and what is required to help stroke patients moving back to the borough after treatment in a specialist stroke hospital.



9.15AM

Camden's primary care trust is researching incidents involving alcohol, and I provide them with information about the number of alcohol related call-outs we have in the area to be presented to the committee who review alcohol licences. It also helps us target our resources to the areas that need them.



8.30PM

I attend a workshop on serious violence and gang crime in Islington, which is attended by a number of young people involved in criminal activity. We show them the consequence of their actions and hope that what we have to say might help to prevent at least some further stabbings, shootings and assaults.



11.30AM

Back to the station to meet a local special needs group. I show them inside an ambulance and

## Foundation trust planning continues

THE Service is continuing to prepare its application to become an NHS foundation trust, with the expectation that it will be approved in 2012.

Director of Corporate Services Sandra Adams said: "It is an extremely thorough process, but we are confident that we are a good organisation

providing high quality emergency and urgent healthcare to Londoners, so we know we will achieve this goal."

As well as the forthcoming annual general meeting and 'An evening with us' event (left), work on the process of electing the first Council of



Governors is also under way. All members will receive further information on this in the coming months.

**FREE**  
*An evening with us*  
London Ambulance Service Public Education Event

## Engagement matters

We have a wide-ranging public education programme, ranging from teaching children how to call 999 and young people about the dangers of carrying knives, to explaining the signs and symptoms of a stroke to groups of older people.

Join us at a free event to find out more about some of these activities from the staff involved and have a chance to give your ideas about how we might develop this work in the future.

**When:** 12 October 2011

**Time:** 5.30 – 7.30pm

**Where:** Robens Suite, 29<sup>th</sup> Floor, Guy's Hospital, Great Maze Street, London, SE1 9RT  
Light refreshments will be served.

To find out more and book a place please contact us:

**Web:** [www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/eveningwithus](http://www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/eveningwithus)

**Email:** [membership@londonambulance.nhs.uk](mailto:membership@londonambulance.nhs.uk)

**Phone:** Call free on 0800 7311 388





Photo by Press Association

# Service responds to riots

**On the frontline: A member of staff at a scene of disturbances in Clapham**

AMBULANCE staff assessed and treated around 250 people who were injured during the violent disturbances that hit the capital in early August.

Specially trained response teams attended calls to help patients in the main areas of disorder, where they worked closely with Metropolitan Police public order officers.

Crews also had to be escorted by the police to attend some patients not

involved in the violence but who lived nearby and needed medical help.

**“Staff showed great commitment and dedication.”**

No members of staff were injured during the three nights of the trouble, although objects were thrown at ambulance vehicles and some

crews reported being threatened and intimidated while trying to care for patients.

Chief Executive Peter Bradley said: “Staff across the organisation showed great commitment and dedication to ensure that Londoners continued to receive the medical care they needed.

“The situation was made even more difficult by the fact that some places were quiet

and then became hostile quite quickly, but staff dealt with everything very professionally.”

Some of the staff who were involved in the Service’s response were among those invited to meet Prime Minister David Cameron and the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall when, in the following week, they visited some of the boroughs that were worst affected by the rioting.

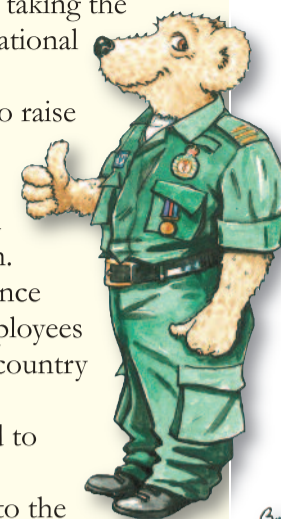
## InBrief

### Heroic appeal

STAFF are taking the lead on a national ambulance campaign to raise money for injured servicemen and women.

Ambulance service employees across the country are being encouraged to donate one hour’s pay to the Help for Heroes charity, or to fundraise on their behalf.

The appeal will run until November.



### Assault sentence

A MAN who severely sprained a student paramedic’s wrist while she was treating him has been given a 24-week suspended prison sentence and a three-month curfew.

Michael Street from Chingford was drunk when he attacked Tamara Taylor after she was called to treat him in a restaurant in August last year.

She had to have a cast put on her arm and was off work for eight weeks.

Judge John Lafferty told Mr Street: “People who work with the ambulance service are providing a very important service to their community and they are entitled that the court should protect them from nuisances like you.”

### Paramedic praised

AN off-duty paramedic who helped to save the life of a football steward has been presented with an Outstanding Public Service Award by Sussex Police.

Josef Kane – who works in the clinical telephone advice team, giving help to patients over the phone – took control when 67-year-old Terry Marshall collapsed and stopped breathing at Crawley Town FC in November last year.

Working with staff at the stadium, Josef helped to resuscitate him before an ambulance crew arrived and took him to hospital.

Terry, who has since made a full recovery, said: “Without him I just wouldn’t be here – it’s as simple as that.”

## London 2012 test events under way



Contributor to the Olympic and Paralympic Games

STAFF have started to put the Service’s plans for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games into practice during a series of official test events.

The first took place in Greenwich Park in July, where crowds of up to 5,000 watched equestrian competitions and the modern pentathlon.

In August, over 150 athletes took part in the London-Surrey Cycle Classic, which passed through the capital.

On each occasion, staff worked alongside a team of medical volunteers from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG).

# Lifting the care of fallers

OLDER patients who fall at home are benefiting from a new scheme to provide them with better long-term care.

Since May this year, ambulance staff across London have been able to contact a team at the Service’s headquarters to refer fallers aged over 65, but who have not needed hospital treatment, to their GP.

The aim is make sure there is a more coordinated approach to help better manage patients who may regularly slip or stumble – and to take steps to identify the causes so that future falls can be prevented.

Up until the end of June, more than 1,200 patients had been referred to their GP, with the hope that this figure will soon get close to the estimated 2,000 fallers every month who are attended by crews but left at home following an assesment.



**Home help: The system aims to benefit older patients**

Emma Williams, who is in charge of the project for the Service, said: “Doctors will be able to spot if patients are falling regularly, or if there is a pattern to their falls and see what can be done to stop it.

“Often there’s an underlying cause – such as a heart condition, dehydration or low blood pressure – or even environmental issues like their footwear, or rugs and pets getting under their feet.”

# Mission accomplished



A GROUP of staff successfully completed their challenge to deliver six decommissioned ambulances to Mongolia.

The volunteers (pictured) took 32 days to travel through Europe and Russia before reaching the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar – overcoming thefts, problems with official paperwork and difficulties in

crossing some national borders on the route.

The vehicles have now been handed over to local health authorities, through international aid charity Go Help, to aid the country's developing ambulance service.

Team member Tim Saunders said: "It was a fantastic experience.

"We hope that the ambulances will now do our exploits justice in their new roles in Mongolia.

"After five weeks on the road and largely living in the back of them, some of us built up quite a bond with our vehicles and we'll be looking forward to an update on how they're doing."

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:communications@londonambulance.nhs.uk)

[www.londonambulance.nhs.uk](http://www.londonambulance.nhs.uk)

# CATCH IT BIN IT KILL IT

Seasonal flu vaccinations are available to help protect people who are most at risk, such as older people, pregnant women and those with pre-existing medical conditions. Start thinking about how to protect yourself and ask your GP for more information.

To prevent the spread of the flu virus, remember to catch it, bin it, kill it:



Always use a tissue when coughing or sneezing



Throw away the tissue afterwards



Kill the virus by washing your hands with soap and water.

