



Ambulance

News

For people who live and work in the capital

Winter 2011

Measuring up

Quality of care details now available online

Page 3



In the saddle

A shift with a cycle response paramedic at Heathrow Airport

Page 4



International rescue

THE Service has been at the centre of an international operation to fly over 100 injured Libyans to the UK for specialised treatment.

Senior managers were asked by the Department of Health to coordinate the process after Prime Minister David Cameron pledged that the NHS would provide medical care and rehabilitation to some of the people caught up in the country's recent conflict.

“We’re very pleased to have been able to take on such an important role.”

The first 50 patients arrived in a three-week period from the end of September – many of them suffering from shrapnel and gunshot wounds – and were taken to specialist hospitals across the country.

In November, it was confirmed that around 50 more victims of the violence, who need artificial limbs after suffering serious injuries, were also going to be brought to the UK for expert help and rehabilitation.

Richard Webber, who led the Service's involvement in his capacity as Director of



Helping hand: Paramedic Peter Dalton chats to Abdul Malek El Hamdi after he arrived in the UK for treatment

Operations, said: “We’re very pleased to have been able to take on such an important role and make sure the whole process has gone as smoothly as possible.

“We’ve been working closely with other ambulance services and hospitals so that these patients received the best medical help.”

The full cost of care for all of the patients is being met by the Libyan government.

Abdul’s journey to London

The first patient to arrive in the capital was 15-year-old Abdul Malek El Hamdi from Tripoli.

He was left with shrapnel in his leg after a bomb exploded in his school playground.

Since arriving in the UK, he has undergone surgery at St Mary’s Hospital in west London and has begun rehabilitation to get him walking and running again.

InBrief

Charity success for



STAFF have completed their fundraising for the Chief Executive’s current charity – and have achieved more than double the original target.

Over £50,000 has been raised in the last two years for MERU, based in Epsom, which designs and builds tailor-made equipment for children with disabilities.

Chief Executive Peter Bradley said: “We set out hoping to raise £25,000, so it has been a tremendous effort and one that will hopefully have made a real difference to the lives of the youngsters who MERU helps.”

A new charity will be chosen by staff in early 2012.

More patients are surviving serious injuries

FIFTY-EIGHT seriously injured Londoners who would have been expected to die are still alive because they were taken directly to a specialist centre by ambulance crews, according to annual figures released by NHS London.

Since April 2010, staff have been taking patients suffering severe injuries following falls from height, car crashes, or stabbings and shootings directly to one of four major trauma centres in the capital where they get immediate access to treatment from clinical experts 24/7.



Get the job – Get flu safe

To book your job, contact your GP today. **NHS**

Foundation trust plans progress

THE Service has taken a significant step towards becoming an NHS foundation trust after gaining support from the capital's health bosses.

Following a meeting with the board of directors, NHS London – the strategic health authority – gave approval for the application to be submitted to the Department of Health.

As Ambulance News went to press, this was due to happen at the beginning of January. If the Secretary of State approves the application, it will then be passed to Monitor, an independent regulator, which could authorise the Service to become a foundation trust by mid 2012.

Before that happens, elections will take place among public and staff members to elect the first Council of Governors.

5,500
The number of signed-up public members

Director of Corporate Services Sandra Adams said: "We are very pleased to have reached this stage of the process, and are looking forward to being in a position to hold the governor elections early in the new year."

- A booklet giving full details of the role of the Council of Governors will be published on the Service's website in January and made available to those members who have previously said that they would be interested in standing for election.

It will also be possible to ask for a paper copy by getting in touch with the membership office using the contact details on the back page.

Clean start

SIX foundation trust members rolled up their sleeves to help ensure the Service's ambulances are as clean as possible.

In a two-week trial, the volunteers checked ambulances and crews as they arrived at two hospital emergency departments to help ensure that anti-infection procedures were being followed.

Their job was to make sure staff were sticking to a 'bare below the elbows' policy, that they were washing their hands after handing over a patient and that ambulances had recently been deep cleaned – something that has to happen every six weeks.

Mehdi Foladi who was



Patient safety: Clean ambulances mean a safe environment for patients

involved said: "It was a pleasure working with the ambulance staff and I have learnt just as much as I was able to contribute."

Ambulance Operations Manager Trevor Hubbard said: "Ambulances need to be

clean to minimise the risk of infection and it's been good to work with our members to make sure they are."

The Service is now looking at how the scheme could be introduced across London.

**Keep Warm
Keep Well**



Wear several layers of thin clothes
Eat well and have regular hot drinks
Keep active

Cold weather can lead to serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes and pneumonia.

Older people can get more help and advice from



on 0800 169 6565

For general advice, visit www.nhs.uk/winterhealth

Designing the future



Looking forward: Emergency Medical Technician Pat Shanahan and Paramedic Bill Leaning test out the new ambulance design

THE inside of a possible ambulance of the future has been revealed.

The model – which has been developed by the Royal College of Arts – was unveiled as part of the London Design Festival.

Patient groups were among those who helped to come up with ideas for the new layout. Paramedic Dixie Dean, who worked on the project, said:

"Involving clinical staff and patients from the beginning of the project has ensured the new design will improve the experience for patients and create a better, more tailored treatment space."

The prototype includes 360 degree access to patients, advanced technology and neat storage space for easier cleaning.

Clinical data goes public

PATIENTS can now see how the treatment provided by ambulance staff in the capital compares with other parts of the country.

All ambulance services in England are reporting each month against a number of different measures, including the time taken to answer 999 calls and the number of patients treated and cared for without needing to go to an A&E department.

Along with these figures, data about the clinical treatment and recovery of patients who suffer a cardiac arrest and stop breathing, a stroke – a type of brain attack – or a heart attack, is also now being put into a specially-designed ‘dashboard’ and published on all ambulance service websites.

“We intend to use this information to ensure that we can continue to improve the outcomes for our patients.”

Director of Health Promotion and Quality Steve Lennox said: “Although it is still early days, over time the indicators will help to give a



Quality check: The new measures are designed to improve patient care

much broader picture of the quality of care that we are able to provide to everyone who calls us for help.

“We intend to use this information, both from ourselves and the other ambulance services, to ensure that we can continue to improve the outcomes for our patients.”

Along with the national Department of Health measures, the Service has developed a further set of about 20 internal indicators, covering areas such as the delivery of training to staff, infection control procedures and how well patients are provided with appropriate pain relief.

These will be updated every month and will be published in the future.

The national dashboard can be found by visiting www.londonambulance.nhs.uk and typing ‘clinical indicators’ into the search box at the top of the page.

Patient information pledge renewed

THE Service is upholding its commitment to protecting patients’ personal details.

All NHS organisations have a legal duty of confidentiality and, as well as being subject to the Data Protection Act 1998, must appoint a senior manager to ensure that information is handled correctly. Staff also have a responsibility to make sure they do their bit by ensuring patient details are stored securely.

More details about how patient information is recorded and used can be found on the Service’s website at www.londonambulance.nhs.uk, or made available by contacting the Governance and Compliance team on 020 7783 2730.

Right treatment, right place

LONDONERS are being reminded this winter that they can get treatment for minor illnesses and injuries from a range of services on their doorstep.

NHS walk-in centres, urgent care centres and minor injuries units can all deal with complaints such as ankle or wrist injuries, sore throats and minor allergic reactions – and help patients avoid potentially long waits for treatment in busy accident and emergency departments.

Service Development Manager Emma Williams said: “There are now over 50 of these centres across London where people can go without an appointment and get quick access to the medical care they need close to home.”

Pharmacies, GPs and GP out-of-hours services, and NHS Direct can also



Well signposted: NHS walk-in centres, urgent care centres and minor injuries units are easy to find

offer advice on less serious conditions.

Emma added: “It’s important that people think about what’s wrong with them first and then seek the appropriate treatment; calling 999 should be for emergencies only.”



To find your nearest walk-in centre, urgent care centre or minor injuries unit visit www.nhs.uk

InBrief

Simply the best

A MEMBER of staff, who gives patients clinical advice over the phone if they do not necessarily need an ambulance, has won a national award.

Clinical Telephone Advisor Andrea Ray was named clinician of the year by the company that produces the computer software used to handle the calls.



Patient pleads guilty

A PATIENT who kicked a paramedic down a flight of stairs has been convicted of assault by beating.

Barnet Paramedic Sarah Rainbow was sent to Genevieve Stolper’s address on Churchfield Avenue in the summer, after a 999 call. As Sarah helped Stolper down the stairs she started struggling, causing Sarah to fall, hit her head and lose consciousness.

After pleading guilty at Hendon Magistrates Court, Stolper was given a community service order, a night time curfew and ordered to pay £120 in compensation.

Fallers care improves

A SYSTEM to make sure that older people who fall in the home get the best possible care is going from strength to strength.

In August, staff referred 710 patients to their GP after they fell at home but did not need to go to hospital, with the figure passing the 850 mark in September.

The referrals mean GPs can spot if their patients are falling regularly, and help prevent it.

How to save a life

AN ONLINE video is now available to teach people how to save lives with a defibrillator – a machine that can restart the heart with an electric shock.

Paramedic Karen Walling gives a step-by-step guide on what to do if a member of the public sees someone suffer a cardiac arrest – when they collapse and stop breathing.

To see the video, go to the Service’s YouTube page at www.youtube.com/londonambulance

Opportunity knocks

WANNABE rock stars and the Service choir went head to head at a 'battle of the bands' event, raising more than £2,700 for staff who are in need.

Eight acts entered the competition, which attracted a 300-strong crowd to a central London venue in October.

Administrator Amy Clarke and Paramedic Richard Webb-Stevens scooped the top prize after an audience vote. They can now look forward to some specialist training from the Institute of Contemporary Music and Performance.

Paramedic Jim Marr helped to organise the event and said: "We had a whole range of music from pop to rock and punk to indie, and all of the groups were excellent."

The money raised will go to the Service's benevolent fund, which offers help to staff in times of financial hardship for reasons such as caring for relatives, long illness or bereavement.

Top of the pops: Terminal Decline get into the groove, and (inset) Amy and Richard celebrate their win



How to contact us



In an emergency

Always call 999 if somebody is seriously ill or injured.

About the care you have received

Contact our patient experiences department if you have any comments, feedback or complaints about the service you have received from us.

Call the team on 020 3069 0240 or email patientexperiences@londonambulance.nhs.uk

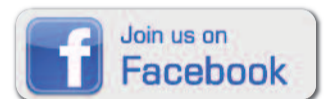


About membership

To speak to us about membership or update your details, call our membership office on 0800 7311 388 or email membership@londonambulance.nhs.uk

Online

Go to our website at www.londonambulance.nhs.uk, search for ldn_ambulance on Twitter or londonambulanceservice on Facebook.



Want to see a particular issue covered in Ambulance News? Call 020 7783 2286 or email communications@londonambulance.nhs.uk

A day in the life of a cycle response paramedic



Janet Greenhead

WITH over 180,000 people passing through Heathrow Airport every day, it is a unique environment for ambulance crews to work in.

The Service has a fully-equipped ambulance based at the site, but since 2004 has also operated a team of paramedics and emergency medical technicians on bicycles.

Covering an area the size of a small town, and with much of the airport pedestrianised, two wheels can often be better than four when responding to the 9,000 emergency calls received from Heathrow every year. Cycle Response Paramedic Janet Greenhead talks about a typical day.

4.45AM I've had a very early start this morning, and my first job is to check the bike. I need to make sure it's safe and that I've got all my equipment. We carry a scaled down version of what's on an ambulance, but we still have a defibrillator – a machine that can restart the heart with an electric shock, an oxygen cylinder, monitoring equipment and simple things like plasters and bandages.

5AM Before I get my first call, I cycle around the airport to make sure there are no road closures which could cause problems for ambulance crews.

7.07AM I get called to Terminal 3 where a man has cut his forehead. It's a very small injury and he didn't lose consciousness. I patch him up and he's able to go on his way.

9.36AM I'm sent to meet an incoming flight with a passenger on board who's fainted. I give him a full assessment but he doesn't want to go to hospital, so he leaves the plane with his family.

10.26AM The call we never want to hear comes in; it's a cardiac arrest – when somebody collapses and stops breathing – in Terminal 3. Thankfully, CPR, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation, is in progress which can increase survival chances. When I arrive another paramedic is on scene along with the airport fire brigade. The patient is an older man who's travelling alone, but sadly, despite our best efforts, we can't get his heart beating again.

12.58PM My next patient is a young woman who's having difficulty breathing after arriving at Terminal 1. She doesn't like flying and often has panic attacks – after some checks and reassurance, she is able to continue with her journey.

1.57PM The last call of the shift is to meet another flight after reports that a member of crew and a passenger have

been scalded with hot coffee. When I get there the passenger has already left, but the air crew member is still on board. She's applied a burns dressing, meaning she's escaped serious injury. I check her over and give her some advice about what to do next.

There are no more calls for me so I head back to the ambulance station to restock and get ready for another 5am start.

