



London Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Corporate Social Responsibility

Annual report 2009-2010

1. Introduction

Good corporate citizenship refers to the way in which NHS organisations can embrace sustainable development and promote health through their day to day activities. It was first identified as a priority in "Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier" (2004).

The London Ambulance Service NHS Trust (LAS) supports a number of activities and initiatives which demonstrate its commitment to being a good "corporate citizen." The aim of this short paper is to provide an outline of those activities and initiatives over the last year.

The report divides the Trust's corporate social responsibility activities into those which are mostly internal (e.g. carbon reduction activities) and external (e.g. public education activities).

2. Internal

2.1 *Chief executive's charity*

In 2009 staff voted the Medical Engineering Resource Unit (MERU) as the new Chief Executive's charity. MERU will now benefit from two years of Service fundraising activity.

The charity designs and manufactures bespoke pieces of equipment for disabled children and young adults, mainly from London and the South East, from birth to the age of 24. These are unique pieces that fill a need specific to each person. The equipment is provided free of charge.

Between 50 and 100 projects are completed each year, including a small range of items that are reproduced to fill a gap in the market where a recurring problem has been identified.

A Charity Fundraising Committee has been set up (including members of front-line staff) to support and co-ordinate fundraising for the charity. Activities have taken place throughout the LAS to raise money.

2.2 *Pennies from Heaven*

Staff have been invited to donate to MERU via the Pennies from Heaven scheme. This is a quick and simple way to make contributions to the charity, and works by the 'pennies' being deducted automatically from staff's pay.

2.3 *Places at the Virgin London Marathon*

The Service has guaranteed places for staff each year to take part in the London Marathon (20 places for the 2010 Marathon). Priority is given to staff who have been unsuccessful in the main public ballot. Staff running for the Service in 2010 will be required to run for MERU, with a minimum fundraising target of £400 each.

2.4 *Work experience*

The Service has a long history of providing work experience placements for a wide range (and number) of young people. A notable example of this is the projects undertaken by 6th form students in the Barking & Dagenham borough over the last two years. Barking & Dagenham run a scheme called "Insight into Management", where students work in small groups on real projects in their host organisation, rather than undertaking routine tasks.

In the first year the students from Barking & Dagenham undertook a survey of young people's perceptions of the LAS, based on the Ipsos-MORI research the Service had commissioned the previous year. This provided useful information for the Trust, as well as giving the young people exposure to life in a 'real' organisation and an opportunity to develop new skills in communication, research methods and giving presentations.

This year, a second group of students helped the Trust to evaluate its "Go Walk" campaign (see section below). Again, this gave the students a useful insight into developing a project of this nature, and presenting the results.

The Trust is considering activities it could undertake with young offenders, to provide them with employment and work experience opportunities. This is currently under discussion and no firm plans have yet been made. However there are a number of public education activities which involve youth offending teams, e.g. knife and gun crime activities (see section 3.9).

2.5 *Go Walk campaign*

One aspect of corporate citizenship is to promote health amongst the workforce, as well as in the communities we serve. An example of how the LAS has done this is the Go Walk campaign, undertaken in June 2009, where teams of staff competed to complete the greatest number of steps each day. More than 600 members of staff took part in the challenge.

This project was led by the Olympic Games Planning Office (OGPO) team.

Funding was secured from NHS London to purchase pedometers for all staff taking part in the challenge, and to produce the communication aids (posters etc.). As well as promoting the health benefits of walking, the campaign also raised awareness of other forms of exercise.

Following the success of this campaign, a new (lower profile) campaign – "Go Stretch" – was introduced later in the year.

2.6 *Cycling*

The IM&T Department, based at London Bridge, encourage staff to cycle between meetings in the HQ area (between Waterloo, Blackfriars and London Bridge).

In March 2009 the Trust launched its own Cycle Loan Scheme, allowing staff to obtain a bicycle through the LAS and pay the money back in instalments. To date 110 members of staff have taken this up. In a recent survey approximately 9.5% of staff stated that cycling was one of their means of getting to work.

The Trust is in discussions with external providers regarding government endorsed "cycle2work" schemes that would be beneficial to both members of staff and to the Trust; once a scheme has been agreed and chosen, it will be widely publicised across the service.

Members of the Cycle Response Team also take part in a number of initiatives to promote safe cycling in London.

2.7 *Recycling*

All LAS sites now have recycling bins, apart from a small number of leased offices. Products that can be recycled include paper products, cans, plastic bottles and cups, carrier bags and other packaging.

2.8 *Procurement*

The Procurement Strategy for 2010 to 2013 has been approved by SMG and the Trust Board, and incorporates the following sections:

- Equality and Inclusion in procurement: the procurement department is committed to ensuring its practices support the Trust's Equality and Inclusion Policy to enable it to meet its duties under equality and anti-discrimination legislation. As part of this commitment, the procurement department and its processes will ensure there is a consistent approach to equality within all contracts and procurement activity across the Trust.
- Supplier diversity: the Trust is committed to fostering a diverse supplier base and its aim is to ensure that businesses of diverse backgrounds and ownership have the opportunity to become valued suppliers of the Trust.

- **Corporate and Social Responsibility:** the Trust is committed to sustainable procurement by ensuring that social, economic and environmental issues are considered during all stages of a procurement process and as part of the whole life of a contract.

The procurement department will follow the guidance of the Official Government Commerce (OGC) detailed in “Make Equality Count” and “Office of Government Commerce & Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs - Joint Note on environmental issues in purchasing – 2003.”

2.9 *Operational developments*

A number of operational changes within the Service have reduced its fuel consumption and had other positive effects on the environment. These changes include the expansion of the cycle response team and motorcycle response team, the increased use of Clinical Telephone Advice, and the referral of some Category C patients to NHS Direct, all of which can save unnecessary ambulance journeys.

The Service is now saving 60,000 – 70,000 ambulance responses per year by finding appropriate alternatives for patients, so reducing vehicle journeys and associated fuel, pollution and congestion issues.

The work to manage 'frequent callers' has also contributed to the positive impacts described above. By calling case conferences of all those involved in the care of patients who often call 999, the Trust is able to secure agreement and funding for suitable care plans for those patients, again reducing the number of ambulance journeys.

2.10 *Carbon reduction*

The LAS Trust Board approved a carbon reduction policy, management action plan and communication plan in March 2010. The management action plan will be overseen by the Carbon Reduction Working Group which will meet bi-monthly from May 2010, and report to the Senior Management Group.

The carbon reduction policy and action plan outline the Trust's commitment to making improvements in environmental performance and preventing pollution. They state the Trust's aim to meet the requirements of current environmental regulations, laws and codes of practice as a minimum standard, and to reach the NHS target (set out in the NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy) to reduce its 2007 carbon footprint by 10% by 2015.

A number of initiatives are underway or being planned within this project to reduce the Trust's carbon footprint. Some examples are:

- Changes to how we provide help to patients (e.g. Clinical Telephone Advice)

- Better designed vehicles (e.g. body work, fuel consumption, use of materials which can be recycled)
- Use of improved technology (e.g. telephone or video-conferencing, remote access)
- Changing lighting, boilers and other systems so they are more efficient, which will save both carbon and money.
- The new lease car policy includes a carbon monoxide limit, so that staff entitled to a lease car cannot obtain a high-polluting vehicle.

The project is set to timescales within three stages, starting in 2009-2010 and being completed by 2014-2015.

Early actions within the plan for 2010-2011 include:

- The implementation of a number of projects which have been submitted to SALIX for match funding that will reduce the Trust's carbon footprint.
- The further roll out of inventory managed by the Logistics team which will reduce stock and, by ensuring a decrease in the disposal of out of date stock, reduce wastage.
- Communications exercise re. 'switch off and shut down,' i.e. staff to be reminded to turn off lights, air conditioning, PCs, printers etc.
- The conclusion of the Green Fleet Review currently being undertaken by the Energy Saving Trust; whose recommendations will be incorporated into the Carbon Reduction Management Plan.

3. External

3.1 *Disaster relief and overseas support*

Over the years, a number of LAS staff have been supported to take part in trips providing disaster relief and other support to communities overseas, including Romania, Tanzania, and following the tsunami in south-east Asia.

The LAS is currently working with colleagues in other parts of the country, and the Department of Health, to provide a team of suitably trained staff, ready to respond at very short notice to official requests for aid following a disaster. It is anticipated that an ambulance team would respond alongside our Fire Service colleagues in this specialist role.

The Service has also hosted a number of delegations from other countries, who have been keen to learn about how the ambulance service runs in London. We have hosted visits from across Scandinavia, Europe, the USA and as far afield as Australia and New Zealand.

The LAS maintains a special relationship with 'Ambulance Access for All' based in Mumbai India and we have been pleased to support the expansion of their services and also visits to LAS by their senior team.

3.2 *The Prince's Trust*

The Prince's Trust is the UK's leading charity working with disadvantaged young people. The Prince's Trust helps them to develop the skills and confidence they need to break down barriers and move forward with their lives.

Since 2009, the LAS has worked with the Prince's Trust by providing staff to work on a secondment basis with them, taking part in their TEAM Programme. The TEAM Programme is a 12-week personal and social development programme for 16-25 year olds, aiming to support them to progress into training, education and employment.

LAS secondees work with the TEAM Programme either for the full period of the programme or on a 20-day placement during the period of the programme. This provides significant opportunities for staff development as well as supporting this very important programme and the young people themselves.

Having supported two cohorts of secondees in the first year, an information-sharing event is currently being organised for May 2010 so that individual learning can be shared and plans made to improve the scheme.

3.3 *Supporting other charities*

Individual staff across the Trust give their time and support to a wide range of other charities. A current example of this is the Voluntary Care Centre (VCC) in Forest Hill and Sydenham, which supports local residents in need.

VCC aims to alleviate hardship over the festive period by providing non-perishable food items in hampers and children's gifts to individuals and families. The charity targets the elderly, disabled, unemployed, single parent families, asylum seekers, children and people experiencing mental health problems.

In 2008 the Christmas Project helped over 1,400 people - including 240 families, 295 elderly and vulnerable people, and 400 children and teenagers.

3.4 *Annual trip to Disneyland, Paris*

Each autumn a party of children with serious illnesses and conditions is taken to Disneyland, Paris, on a trip ("the Magical Taxi Tour") organised by the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers. The Service supports this trip by providing ambulance vehicles and staff, to provide emergency care and transport if required on the journey or during the stay in Paris.

3.5 *Tackling health inequalities*

The Trust's Patient & Public Involvement (PPI) Action Plan and Equality & Inclusion Strategy both aim to tackle health inequalities. A prioritisation system has been developed for PPI activities, ensuring that projects are targeted at communities with the greatest need.

An example of this is the Tower Hamlets Project, which includes the provision of basic life support training to women with babies and young children. These sessions are targeted at the Bengali community in Tower Hamlets, who experience a higher rate of infant mortality than other groups. The infant mortality rate is now beginning to fall.

The Tower Hamlets Project has also initiated a training programme for front line staff and community groups called Get the Right Treatment, which uses a range of scenarios to show which NHS service should be accessed in a variety of situations. A version for young people, with different scenarios, is currently being developed.

A group has recently been established to improve the service provided to people with learning disabilities. This group is prone to certain medical conditions which may go undetected, either because they may find it difficult to articulate their symptoms, or because those health risks are not known by health professionals. There are plans to increase staff training in this area, and to provide materials to support patients with learning disabilities (e.g. what to do if they are ill).

The Trust is also in the process of piloting a text messaging service for patients and the public who are deaf and/or speech-impaired, but who need to call 999.

A number of current policy developments pay attention to the Service's role in addressing health inequalities, e.g. the mental health strategy, the long term conditions strategy and the older people's strategy.

3.6 *Community Defibrillation Programme*

The Community Defibrillation Team works in partnership with the British Heart Foundation to place defibrillators in public places (stations, tourist attractions etc.), maintain them, and train the staff in the host organisations. To date, 207 defibrillators have been placed in the community, and over 6,000 members of the public have been trained (by the LAS) to use them.

The team also provides refresher training for members of the public as defibrillator users require refresher training on an annual basis. This has resulted in six more long-term survivors in the past year, with the overall cardiac arrest survival rate for these sites being 31%.

3.7 *Community Resuscitation Training*

The Community Resuscitation Training team provides basic life support training to community groups across London, free of charge. They have trained more than 10,000 people in the last year.

3.8 *Community First Responders*

Community First Responders can provide an initial response to some 999 calls in more 'remote' communities, where it may take an ambulance longer to arrive. There are now 350 Community First Responders across London, operating in 27 different areas. They are mainly based in outer London, in more sparsely-populated areas.

Other ways of using volunteers from communities are currently being explored, for example the possibility of having volunteers who are wheelchair-users based in the control rooms.

3.9 *Public Education*

Staff across the Trust are involved in a wide range of public education activities.

A number of materials and resources have been designed and introduced for staff involved in public education work. These range from lesson plans, presentations and display banners, through to give-away items such as pens, rulers, oyster-card holders and leaflets. The Trust has also introduced a development programme for this group of staff, to help them develop their skills and knowledge in this area.

A public education resource library has been launched, and is available on *the pulse* for all staff to access.

Examples of the Trust's public education activities in the last year include:

- Consultation events with Healthcare for London, including consultation on the Trust's plans to become an FT.
- Consultation events on policy developments, e.g. stroke and trauma services.
- Open evenings for the Community Responder scheme.
- Youth Workers events and Child Safety weeks.
- School visits.
- Junior Citizen Schemes.
- Talks about the LAS, e.g. Ethnic Minority Advocacy Groups, Neighbourhood Watch groups, and Older People's Forums.
- Attendance at voluntary sector meetings, e.g. Age Concern board meetings.
- Anti-knife and gun crime events.
- Emergency services open days (e.g. Metropolitan Police).
- Health awareness events (e.g. health and social care fairs, "hearty lives" events, hospital open days).
- Other community events, e.g. summer festivals and fairs, fun days, community days, town shows.
- Faith events, e.g. "Faith in Health".
- First aid demonstrations and basic life support training sessions.
- Road Traffic Collision reconstructions and road safety events (e.g. "driven by consequences" and "safe drive, stay alive").

- Visits to ambulance stations.
- Careers talks.
- Visits to cubs, scouts, beavers, brownies and guides groups.

There are 297 events or activities on the PPI and public education database for the period April 2009 to March 2010. More activities have almost certainly taken place during that time, but have not been reported to the PPI and public education team. Reporting is improving significantly with the introduction of the resource library on *the pulse* and the recruitment of the PPI & Public Education Co-ordinator.

4. Good Corporate Citizen Assessment Model

The website www.corporatecitizen.nhs.uk allows organisations to take a self-assessment to monitor their progress on sustainable development, and includes guidance on how to develop good corporate citizenship. It poses a number of questions for organisations, grouped under the following headings:

- Travel
- Procurement
- Facilities management
- Workforce
- Community engagement
- Buildings

A self-assessment exercise was undertaken against these criteria during the year, led by Christine McMahon, Project Manager. The exercise showed that the Trust was making significant progress against all the areas considered, although naturally there was still room for improvement.

An action plan for sustainability development management was developed following the self-assessment exercise. This sets out – in some detail - energy and carbon reduction activities, who within the Trust will be responsible for them, how they will be implemented and how the impact will be evaluated.

5. Conclusion

This paper provides an overview of the Trust's activities which relate to its corporate citizenship during 2009-2010.

This demonstrates that the Trust is taking a number of important steps in addressing its responsibilities as a good corporate citizen, which can be built on for the future.

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