

Our winter plans



Providing a safe service to our patients is our number one priority this winter, and we have plans in place to enable us to do this.

We are expecting the number of life-threatening 999 calls to go up from 1,200 to 1,800 a day, and we will focus on getting help to these patients as quickly as possible.

Over winter, people who call us about minor conditions like cut fingers, colds and toothache will not get an ambulance, and will be advised to go to their GP or pharmacist or call 111 for help. As a result, we anticipate saving up to 150 ambulances a day to attend emergency calls.

[Find out more about our winter plans](#)

NHS 111 service up and running



Our running of the NHS 111 system in south east London has got off to a busy start, following the switchover from NHS Direct on 19 November.

We have been receiving up to 650 calls on weekdays and 1,200 on a Saturday and Sunday and have exceeded our target to answer 95 per cent of these calls within 60 seconds.

As part of the step-in arrangement, we took over the management of the existing call centre in Beckenham and 120 former NHS Direct staff joined our organisation.

Cycle medics receive national award



Our cycle response unit has won the Emergency Care in the Right Place, First Time category of the [2013 NHS Innovation Challenge Prizes](#).

Cycle medics respond to emergency calls in particularly congested areas of the capital, giving potentially life-saving treatment to patients while an ambulance is on the way. Staff also treat people with less serious illnesses and injuries at the scene without them needing to go to hospital – freeing up ambulance crews to respond to other calls.

We will share the £100,000 prize with other ambulance services to promote the use of cycle responders elsewhere in the country, and use our share to expand our cycle response unit and invest in new equipment.

Our role in managing hospital pressures

To help manage the pressure on London's hospitals this winter, we have established a dedicated team that is monitoring the number of patients we are taking to each hospital and requesting



ambulance crews to travel to a different emergency department if a particular hospital starts to become too busy.

By redirecting our crews to alternative emergency departments, we hope that hospital closures can be avoided and delays in the time patients wait to be handed over at hospital can be minimised.

This pan-London initiative has been agreed with hospitals and clinical commissioning groups, and is being funded from the £55m winter money that was allocated to the capital.

New executive appointments



We have appointed three new directors to our executive team.

Mark Whitbread will take up the role of Director of Paramedic Education and Development in the New Year. Mark is currently a consultant paramedic with the Service.

David Prince has been appointed as Director of Support Services. David is currently Group HR Director at CareTech Community Services and has previously worked with the National Autistic Society and Royal Mail in HR director roles. He will oversee the departments which directly support frontline delivery (IM&T, HR, fleet and logistics, and estates).

Mike Evans has joined us as Director of Business Development. Mike, who has sales and business development experience gained within the healthcare industry, will work with us for the next nine months to help us maximise our business within the NHS and explore other opportunities which could support our frontline delivery.

Sign up for Twitter Alerts from us



We are one of the first 999 services to join Twitter's UK alert service for emergencies.

In times of a crisis, we will be able to send messages to our Twitter followers who have signed up to the service. They will receive our alert as a text message and it will appear in their Twitter timeline with an orange bell.

To sign up for Twitter Alerts from us, go to our London Ambulance Service Alert [setup page](#).



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