

London Assembly review of our Service



The London Assembly's Health and Public Services Committee has published its review into the London Ambulance Service. It has made a number of recommendations having considered the operational, financial and organisational challenges facing the Service.

We are pleased that the committee accepts that the London Ambulance Service should remain part of the NHS. We also welcome its recommendation to develop closer working relations with the Mayor, the London Assembly and other emergency services. We will now consider the recommendations in detail and respond to them in the new year. [Read the London Assembly report and our response](#).

Industrial action on 30 November



Our Service came under severe pressure during the industrial action against the proposed pension reforms.

Our planning assumption, in line with most other ambulance services, was that around 75 per cent of frontline staff would work on 30 November. However, only half either worked as normal or provided emergency cover – making themselves available to respond to patients with life-threatening and serious conditions. We were able to answer all 999 calls quickly and prioritise our most critical patients as most of our control room staff worked. However, many patients had to wait for ambulances and we had to refer other callers elsewhere for help.

We are currently reviewing the events of 30 November to determine the impact on patients and what lessons can be learnt. The strategic health authority is also carrying out a review.

Our application to become a foundation trust



Our application to become a foundation trust took a step forward this month, as NHS London gave approval for it to be submitted to the Department of Health. Once approved by the Secretary of State, our application will go to the independent regulator, Monitor, and we hope to receive authorisation by next autumn.

Elections for our Council of Governors will start once the Secretary of State approves our application, which we hope will be in the spring. [Find out more about why we want to become a foundation trust](#).

Patient re-contact rates amongst lowest in country

The number of patients contacting us again after we have given them advice over the phone or treated and discharged them at a scene is among the lowest in the country.

Re-contact rates are part of the quality measures that were introduced for ambulance services nationally in April and are a guide to the quality of care given to patients. Latest figures show that we provided telephone advice to over 6,400 people in October, and had a low re-contact rate of 6.8 per cent. A zero rate would not be expected as a number of patients are advised to



call us back if their condition changes. Also, having provided care to over 31,000 patients on scene – almost twice as many as any other service – only 4.3 per cent of patients contacted us again within 24 hours. Again, this is a low rate. These figures suggest we provide good quality care and advice to patients. [Quality measures are published on our website](#) where our figures can be seen alongside those of other ambulance trusts.

Handover of patients at hospital



Data provided to the BBC under Freedom of Information identified that the London Ambulance Service experiences more delays in handing patients over at hospital than other ambulance trusts. Almost half of patients taken to hospitals in the capital wait longer than 15 minutes to be assessed.

We are working with our partners, hospitals and commissioners to improve the handover process so that it is a better experience for patients. We have introduced an alert system to help hospitals manage their workload and to let them know when ambulances are on the way. [Read our response following the BBC's publication of handover data.](#)

#crash24 focuses on road collisions in capital



The BBC joined us to get an insight into a typical day on London's roads and the dozens of collisions we attend, as part of its 'crash24' initiative looking at the scale of road collisions in the UK.

Over a 24-hour period the BBC ran a live feed on its website, which was updated with reports from journalists who attended crashes with our staff, as well as advice, facts and figures, and messages from the public. Nearly 600,000 people went online to view the live feed, and we had the opportunity to provide advice to road users through radio and TV interviews. [View the BBC's interactive map](#) which plots every fatal accident in the UK between 1999 and 2010, and allows users to look at local data.

Opening of alcohol treatment centres



As alcohol-related 999 calls increase in the run-up to Christmas, we have set up treatment centres in the West End and City of London to treat patients without needing to take them to hospital.

Last year, 286 patients who had too much to drink were treated at the West End centre, which is operated in partnership with Westminster Council. Only ten of these needed further treatment at hospital. The other centre is a temporary field hospital which is situated at Liverpool Street train station, and is staffed by us and St John Ambulance. [Find out more about the treatment centres.](#)



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