



West Midlands Ambulance Service
University NHS Foundation Trust



MONTHLY Briefing

August 2022



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WHAT AN AMAZING 11 DAYS IT WAS

With one final roar from Birmingham's 'Raging Bull', the Commonwealth Games drew to a close at the Alexander Stadium, but what an 11 days of action it was...page 2



Also this month....Thank You From NHS England; Still Leading The Way On Call Answering; PTS Crew Help Mum To Deliver Baby; Mass Recruitment Day Takes Place and much more....

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What An Amazing 11 Days

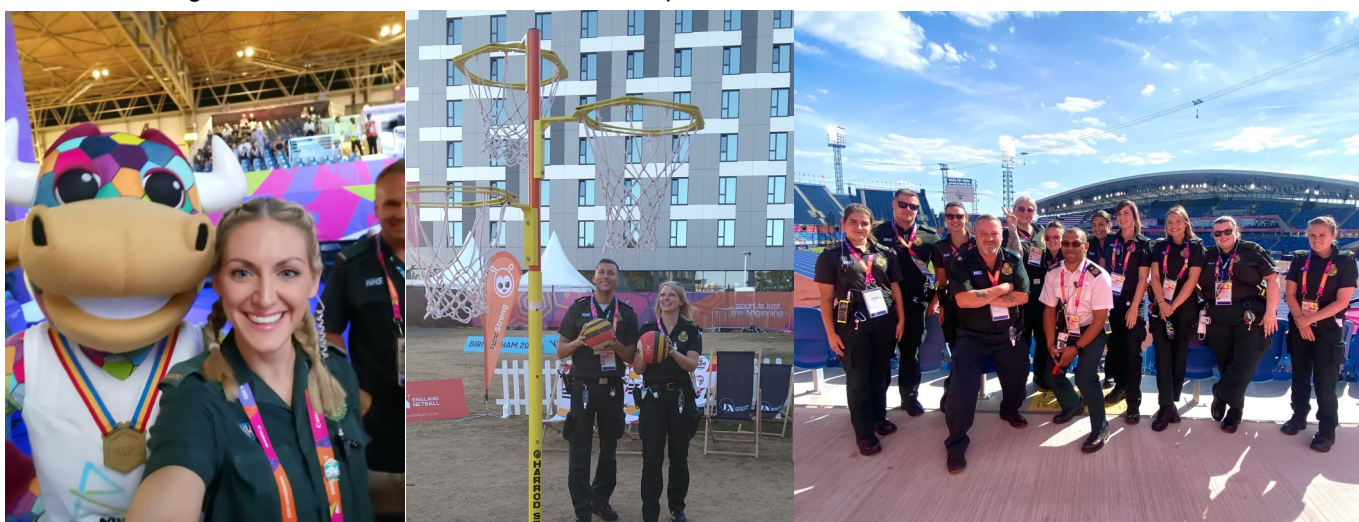
With one final roar from Birmingham's 'Raging Bull', the Commonwealth Games drew to a close at the Alexander Stadium on Monday 8th August, but what an 11 days of action it was. The 22nd Commonwealth Games was the biggest sporting event the Trust has ever had to provide medical cover for, working alongside medical teams put in place by the Organising Committee. Years of hard work and planning came to fruition for the Trust, and thanks to the hard work from directorates across the organisation, it ran extremely smoothly from our perspective. Trust



Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "It was a hugely successful event that has placed Birmingham and the wider West Midlands in the spotlight for all of the right reasons. I want to pay tribute to the planning team and hundreds of staff who gave up time off with their families to work during the Games. So much hard work went into the organisation and everyone did an amazing job helping to keep the huge crowds safe. I am immensely proud of everything they did to show what a wonderful city Birmingham is and indeed the wider West Midlands and what it has to offer."

A Real Morale Booster for Staff

Since the announcement that the Games would be held in Birmingham, a huge amount of work was undertaken by many within the Trust. In total the dedicated Planning Team scheduled more than 23,000 hours of ambulance time including 1,766 shifts made up of 770 on ambulances and 226 commander shifts. They were supported by 160 shifts in our control room, 60 vehicle preparation operative shifts preparing up to 60 ambulances and 27 cars each day and 40 shifts in the National Ambulance Resilience Unit. In total, crews helped 166 patients of which just 83 were taken to hospital. Head of Emergency Planning and Commonwealth Games Lead for the Trust, James Williams, said: "I want to say a huge 'thank you', to everyone who was involved, for making the Games the success it was. It's was great seeing the whole Trust get behind the event and helping colleagues out wherever they can. It's been a real morale booster, not just the crews at venues but all the backroom staff as well. I must also thank the planning team; we started this journey in December 2017 as soon as Birmingham was awarded the Games and that really stepped up a gear in early 2021. It has been quite a journey, but so worth it. We have delivered a magnificent event, one which we can all be proud of."



Trust us to care.

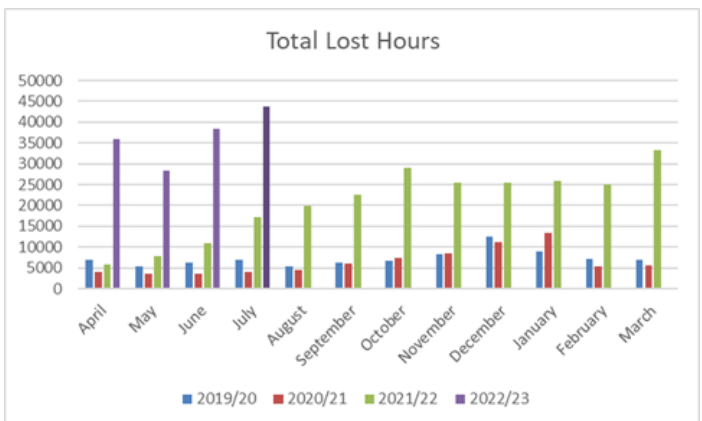
Top Stories.....

Thank You From NHS England

The Regional Director of NHS England has written to the Trust congratulating staff on a job well done in the delivery of the recent Commonwealth Games. In his letter, Dale Bywater, commented that the Games had to be planned in a much shorter time frame than normal as Birmingham picked up the Games after Durban in South Africa withdrew in 2017, leaving just five years to put together the largest event on UK soil since the Olympics in 2012. In his letter, he said: "There was much work to do around ensuring the ability of NHS services to support where necessary against a backdrop of some of the busiest times we've ever seen in the NHS. We also needed to understand how the athletes' villages would access NHS support when required, whilst also ensuring NHS services were not overwhelmed. With over 7,000 games family members residing in the region over this period, there was much to prepare for and it cannot be underestimated the amount of work that has gone into ensuring the NHS was not significantly impacted. The West Midlands showcased the very best of itself over this time, and the NHS played its own part in seamlessly doing the same and supporting the Games when required. I would like to personally thank the staff in your organisation for the role they all played in making this event the success it has undoubtedly been."

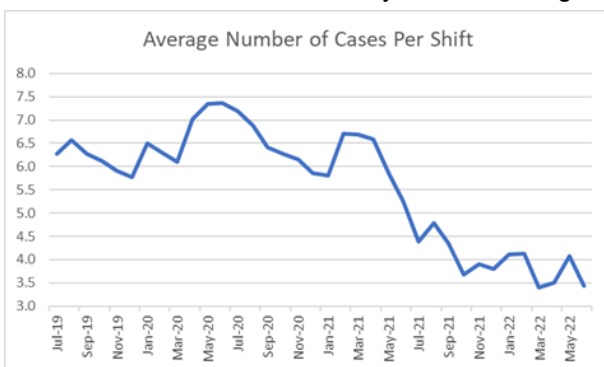
Worst Month Ever, But Efforts Appreciated

July 2022 will go down with an accolade that we all hoped it wouldn't: the worst month ever for hospital handover delays. In total, the Trust lost 43,759 hours in delays. That represents an increase of over 5,000 hours compared to June, the previous worst month, which saw the Trust lose 38,373 hours. In real terms, the Trust lost almost 120 twelve hours shifts every single day. Despite this, Commissioners have been quick to ask for their thanks to be passed on to staff for all of their efforts. Gareth Robinson, Director of Delivery & Transformation at NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin contacted the Trust after a particularly bad weekend: "Your teams on the system calls and the clinical teams on the ground have contributed massively to reducing the risk. There is obviously the practical support of cohorting and supporting with diverts which is very material. But there is also the way that your teams in the Strategic Command Cell have engaged and looked to work positively, which makes a big difference to how all of those involved work together. So thank you." WMAS Director of Clinical Commissioning, Mark Docherty, added: "I know it's difficult out there, but the work our staff do is clearly appreciated and I am grateful for everything they are doing to try and keep patients safe."



Ambulance Crews Seeing Fewer Patients

New data shows that the average number of patients an ambulance crew sees during a shift has dropped by more than 50% over the last three years. Looking back over that time period, at one point crews were seeing on

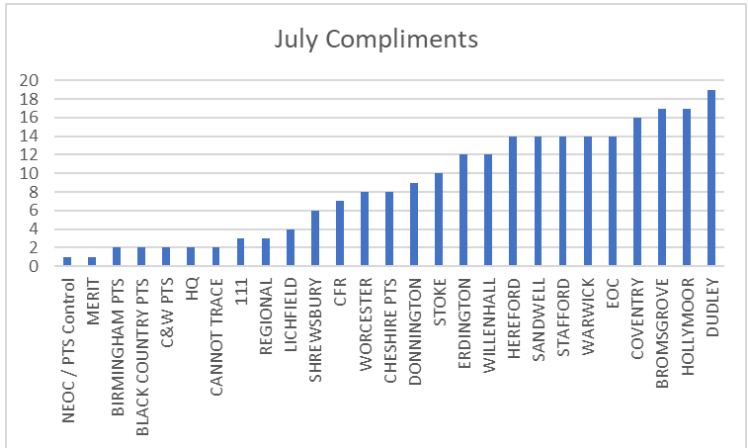


average 7.4 patients per 12 hour shift; in June it was just 3.4 and we know some crews end up seeing only one patient in a shift due to hospital handover delays. Emergency Services Operations Delivery Director, Nathan Hudson, said: "This data shows just how much of an impact the handover delays are having on our service. The idea of a hospital having a nurse who only saw three or four patients in a shift would be catastrophic, so the fact that we are able to continue operating is testament to the hard work of staff and the ability of the Trust to divert more resources to frontline care. We continue to do everything possible to work with hospitals to find new and innovative ways to free up crews more quickly."

Top stories.....

Over 230 Compliments Despite Worst Delays Ever

Despite it being the worst month ever for hospital handover delays, the Trust received more letters of thanks than ever. In total, 233 letters, emails, web forms and social media posts were made by members of the public during the month of July, thanking staff for the care and compassion that they had shown to patients during the month. Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "It is perhaps counterintuitive that we should see a rise in the number of thank you messages at a time when the Trust has never been under more pressure, but that is what happened. For me, the message is simple; the work that each member of staff does, wherever they work in the organisation, makes a difference to our patients. Whether they work in a corporate function, are a VPO, mechanic, or someone in the control room, on the road or anywhere else for that matter, we all make a difference. President John F Kennedy once asked a janitor at NASA what he did, and he replied that he helped put man on the moon! We may not achieve that, but we do make a huge difference to people in their hour of need and we all make that happen. Thank you to everyone within the service for what you do – you really do make a difference and we should never forget it."



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Still Leading The Way On Call Answering

The latest data to come from BT shows that WMAS continues to have by far the best call answering in the country. During July, 70,813 emergency 999 calls waited over 2 minutes to be answered in England, but only 77 were in the West Midlands, just 0.1% of the total. The month was a difficult one for call assessors with record hospital handover delays leading to extended response times which results in multiple call backs from worried patients, relatives and friends.

Trust	April	May	June	July	YTD
WMAS	8	5	33	77	123
1	6,008	8,589	10,752	11,622	36,971
2	445	445	408	579	1,877
3	4,481	6,051	10,274	14,498	35,304
4	1,019	715	849	1,703	4,286
5	4,557	5,091	6,845	11,400	27,893
6	6,713	2,949	7,913	9,817	27,392
7	3,391	2,161	3,123	6,686	15,362
8	6,181	3,982	6,053	7,913	24,129
9	4,304	845	2,481	6,518	14,148
Total	37,107	30,834	48,731	70,813	187,485

In addition, the Trust took 2,418 calls for other Trusts during the month, up from 1,661 in June. IEUC & Performance Director, Jeremy Brown, said: "The work that our call assessors do is second to none. The fact that we are able to answer calls so quickly is down to a lot of hard work. The call assessors do a vital job, sometimes under very difficult circumstances, not only because of the life threatening calls they deal with on a daily basis but also having the challenge of dealing with often angry and upset people because of delayed responses. All in all, the pressure they deal with makes the work of the team ever more impressive."

Thank You For Your Efforts

August saw Donnington Hub receive a very special visit. Councillor Raj Mehta, who is currently the Mayor of Telford and Wrekin, wanted to visit the Hub to personally say 'thank you' to staff for their ongoing efforts and for everything they have done during the difficult challenges that the pandemic and NHS pressures have brought over the last few years. Whilst visiting the hub, the councillor was given a tour of the site, had a look around an ambulance and was talked through the process the vehicles go through during the make ready process, which ensures they are clean and restocked by Vehicle Preparation Operatives, to ensure staff can go straight out and start responding to jobs as soon as their shift begins.



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News.....

PTS Crew Help Mum To Deliver Baby

A Patient Transport Services crew from Frankley were in the right place at the right time last month when an expectant mum went into labour. PTS crew Ken Jones and Rebecca Wardle had just pulled up at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham to drop off a patient when they were notified by a member of the public of a lady in distress in a car nearby. When the crew approached the lady, it was clear she was in active labour. Her husband ran to the maternity ward to get help whilst Ken and Rebecca stayed with the woman. The baby wasn't hanging around though and with the crew's help and encouragement, the woman successfully delivered a health baby boy in the back of the car. The cord was around babies' neck on delivery which the crew dealt with, before wrapping him in sheets and blankets from their vehicle whilst maintaining Mum's dignity until the maternity team and husband arrived soon afterwards. Claire Atkinson, Senior Operations Manager for PTS Birmingham and the Black Country, said: "I am immensely proud of them. This is totally out of the norm for PTS staff to deal with but they both handled the situation amazingly!" Photo shared with permission from Mum.



Directors Out and About

Trust Chairman, Prof Ian Cumming, has recently been visiting hubs to meet with staff, a decision he took based on feedback from staff saying that they wanted to senior leaders within the organisation out and about listening to views. Recently, Medical Director, Dr Alison Walker spent an evening at Warwick Hub where she spent time chatting with crews, talking about clinical matters and offer her knowledge and support. She also went out on the ambulance for a few jobs with Claire (Clinical Team Mentor) Sarah (Student Paramedic) and Ellie (Cov Uni Student). Dr Walker said: "I'd like to thank Senior Operations Manger, Steve Nesbeth, and all of his staff who I met for making me feel so welcome. I really enjoyed talking about clinical matters and will definitely be following up on many of the ideas you have put to me. There is no question that we have a wealth of knowledge and ideas out there and it was a pleasure to hear colleagues talk so passionately about how we can improve care for our patients."



Mass Recruitment Day Takes Place

Only a day after the NHS set out it's winter plan in August, WMAS held one of it's biggest recruitment events ever. In total, 103 graduates, registered and student paramedics came to the National Academy to discuss their future with the Trust. In a letter to the NHS, Chief Executive Amanda Pritchard, explained how the coming months will be dealt with to ensure patients get the treatment they need. She said: "Clearly, expanding capacity is dependent on both sufficient workforce and workforce wellbeing. This is why it is important that plans are based on realistic assumptions, including for how many staff can be recruited and at what speed. We have identified six metrics that are key to the provision of safe and effective urgent and emergency care including mean 999 call answering times; Category 2 ambulance response times; average hours lost to ambulance handover delays per day and 111 call abandonment." Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, who was at the Academy to assist, said: "I'm delighted that we were able to recruit 79 new staff members on the day. Together with another 16 who will require some further work but should join us, we have made a real step forward in meeting the requirements of the Winter Plan. We will continue to recruit staff as quickly as possible so that we can continue to provide the best service we can."



News.....

HART Gets a Visit from Down Under

Amongst the excitement at the new Oldbury Hub ahead of the Commonwealth Games Closing ceremony was a special visit. The Trust played host to colleagues who had travelled all the way from New Zealand; National Operations Support Manager, Scott Morris and Communications & Technology Lead for St John Ambulance New Zealand, Colin Ballantyne. The pair received a full demonstration from HART on their specialist equipment, training and capabilities and had a walkthrough of our Major Incident capability and response. Head of Fleet and Facilities Management, Tony Page, also reviewed our electric fleet which now consists of electric versions of a double-crewed ambulance, a patient transport service vehicle, rapid response vehicle and support fleet. Tony said: "We shared with them our approach to sustainability, our achievements to date in the fleet and estates space, as well as our strategy moving forwards. They commented on how impressed they were on what they had seen. New Zealand are looking to improve their emergency services capability to respond to serious and major incidents, so the HART team and Major Incident part of the visit was particularly helpful to them."



Second Health and Wellbeing Roadshow a Success

August saw the Trust's second Health and Wellbeing roadshow take place in Brierley Hill. Staff from both Navigation Point and Millennium Point took the opportunity to get involved in the roadshow which had everything from health checks, 30-minute menopause training courses, cakes and refreshments and a very popular rowing and bike challenge too! Staff Advice and Liaison Service (SALS) advisors, staffside representatives and the



Trust's Chaplain were also on hand to chat with staff throughout the event. Winning the rowing challenge was IT's Jack Burrows who completed 1000m in 1min 44secs. Meanwhile, Jimmy Lauf won the rowing challenge by doing the same distance in 3mins 55secs. Maria Watson, Workforce Manager, said: "It was really great to see so many staff join in whether that was asking questions, visiting the menopause café or literally being cheered on whilst competing on the bike and rowing machine. Thanks to everyone who attended and my colleagues who helped to put on another great event." Murcy Ashman, Integrated Emergency and Urgent Care Call Assessor and Staffside rep, added: "What a lovely day we had with the representation of the Unison Reps, SALS advisors, Mental Health first aiders, Menopause Advocates, Slimming World reps, health checkers and the Gym challengers."

More Bleed Control Kits in the Community

August saw the installation of two more life-saving bleed control kits in the region, thanks to partnership working with NHS Charities Together. Tim Cronin, Community Response Manager, visited Co-op Funeral Care in Bromsgrove recently and met staff member Pam, who was proud to include the kit in the secure and publicly accessible defibrillator (PAD) cabinet on the wall outside. A bleed control kit has also been installed at the Black Star Pub in Stourport-on-Severn, again paired with the defibrillator. NHS Charities Together has funded the installation of 80 bleed control kits across the West Midlands which WMAS aim to place within Community PAD sites in areas which we have identified as having major trauma/bleeding previously. The Bleed Control Kits contain a tourniquet and other trauma dressings and are vital to help save the lives of patients who suffer major trauma with catastrophic bleeding, whether caused by an accident or assault. Tim said: "This project follows on from the hard work of The Daniel Baird Foundation which was set up after the son of Lynne Baird was fatally stabbed in Birmingham in 2017. They have already started to get kits out into the community. Currently we have more than 300 kits registered, which the call taker can direct a member of the public to collect in an emergency."



Trust us to care.

News.....

Dudley's Emma Helps Create Area of Remembrance

Dudley Technician Emma Barnes was looking to create an area of remembrance within the hub's outdoor quiet space to remember those who served with the Trust, but are no longer with us. Unsure of how to do this, Emma turned to her Dad, Steve, who is quite an experienced gardener and all-round handyman. Soon after, Steve came up with a design and crafted a marble tablet with an inscribed plaque. Steve, Emma and Emma's husband, Pat (Dudley Clinical Team Mentor), placed the plaque within the outdoor space at Dudley and also added a bit of colour to the garden with a few well-chosen plants. Senior Operations Manager for Dudley, Dax Morris, thanked Steve on behalf of the hub for his time and efforts creating this memorial and the thoughts and comfort it will give to our staff.



New Life for Old Ambulance



In the ambulance service you never know what the next moment might bring, so we probably shouldn't have been surprised when the Trust was contacted by an Inspector with the Belgian Federal Police, highway patrol asking about one of our vehicles! Inspector Tine Soetaert wrote to say that his team had just impounded a 2010 plated Citroen Relay and they could see it used to belong to WMAS. Unfortunately, as it was a lease vehicle, all that Motor Claims Manager, Karl Roper, could tell Inspector Soetaert was that it had been sent back in 2015. Although it was the last we expected to hear on the matter, a further update came from Belgium last month to say that they had found the new owners who were transporting the ambulance to Ukraine as part of the global humanitarian aid effort supporting the medical effort in the war torn country.

Proud Mum Moment

A Patient Transport Service Call Taker at Tollgate Emergency Operations Centre recently had a proud Mum moment at work. Maureen Hammonds, who has worked for WMAS for more than 13 years, has now got company at work after not one but two of her daughters applied for roles within the Trust too! Daughters Samantha Sheldon, who is an out of hours Controller, and Ella McCully, an out of hours Call Handler both recently joined the Trust to work in the Non-Emergency Operations Centre at Tollgate. As you can see from the family photo at work, Maureen is so proud of her daughters and is so pleased to have them as part of the team!



All the Best Bev!

August saw the Trust bid farewell to Emergency Medical Dispatcher, Bev Rigby, as she left the Trust for pastures new. Bev completed her last night shift with Team 4 at Millennium Point on Thursday, 11th August after an incredible 37 years working in the Emergency Operations Centre for the service. She said: "I have had an amazing job for over 37 years. I have seen a lot changes in the control room, but one thing that doesn't change are the amazing people who work there. Many thanks to all and especially Team 4 who are the best!" Bev was well and truly spoilt by her team too, being gifted vouchers, chocolate, flowers, and even her favourite Smirnoff Ice to see her off into retirement! Good luck for the future Bev and enjoy your next chapter.





WMAS Round-Up

August 2022: The Numbers



Welcome to the latest monthly stats round-up where we look at performance and demand across the 999 emergency service, NHS 111 and the Trust's Patient Transport Service.

999 Emergency Service



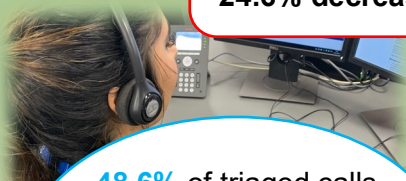
125,582 emergency contacts (inc. all 999 calls, duplicates, events & 111 referrals). **10% decrease** on August '21

84,436 unique incidents
Average of 2,723 a day
14.5% decrease on August '21

36,905 hours lost due to regional hospital handover delays
84.8% increase on August '21

Hear & Treat
11,650 patients treated over the phone
24.6% decrease on August '21

See & Convey
45,851 patients conveyed for further treatment
12% decrease on August '21



NHS 111

48.6% of triaged calls recommended to contact primary care. Compared to 54% in August '21

92% calls answered within 60 seconds. Compared to 7.2% in August '21

11.5% of triaged calls resulted in an ambulance. Up from 9.8% in August '21

Patient Transport Service



73,452 journeys undertaken across all contracts
9.8% increase on August '21

36,441 Renal journeys (inc. aborted)
12% increase on August '21

3,439 aborted journeys
37.6% increase on August '21