



West Midlands Ambulance Service
University NHS Foundation Trust



MONTHLY Briefing

November 2022



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TRUST CELEBRATES HEROIC ACTS AND LONG SERVICE

November saw the Trust host its two annual awards ceremonies, the first time it has been able to do since 2019 as a result of the pandemic...page 2



Also this month....CQC Praises WMAS Staff; First Ambulance Despatched From New Sandwell Hub; Congratulations To Our CWG Planning Team; We Will Remember Them and much more....

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Top Stories.....

Trust Celebrates Heroic Acts and Long Service

Acts of courage, bravery and heroism were celebrated at the Trust's annual awards ceremonies in November. The Staff Long Service & Excellence Awards and Excellence in the Community Awards were held at The Copthorne Hotel in Brierley Hill with more than 400 guests, including the Deputy-Lieutenant of the West Midlands, Richard Boot OBE, and the High Sheriff of the County of West Midlands, David Moorcroft OBE, attending each ceremony. Due to the pandemic, this was the first time the Trust had been able to host the ceremonies since 2019. Awards included Long Service, Chief Officer Commendations, Student Paramedic of the Year, Mentor Awards, Apprenticeship Awards, Community Initiative and Partnership Awards; St John Ambulance Awards; Community First Responder Long Service Awards and the CFR of the Year. Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "To have the chance to recognise the extraordinary efforts of our staff, volunteers and members of the public is extremely important. We heard so many fantastic stories of people going above and beyond and all for the same reason: to provide the very best levels of care to our patients. A big thank you and well done to all of our award winners; I am incredibly proud of them all." WMAS Chairman, Prof Ian Cumming, added: "It is important we recognise these people because they all do remarkable things, day in, day out, despite the NHS facing some of the toughest challenges ever seen. A huge and heartfelt 'thank you' to them all for everything they do."



CQC Praises WMAS Staff

The Care Quality Commission has paid tribute to the 'professionalism' of WMAS staff after they carried out an unannounced inspection of the Worcestershire health system towards the end of last month. While they highlighted many of the well-known challenges, the praise for WMAS was heartfelt. They highlighted the dedicated staff who put patients first using innovative approaches to meet patient needs as well as the really good work by the Hospital Ambulance Liaison Officers. The inspectors also highlighted the good infection prevention and control procedures that they observed, vehicle cleanliness and the management of drugs. In particular, they highlighted the vehicle preparation being to a very high standard, saying the efficiency of the make ready model was 'really impressive'. The hub was very clean, very well organised and well managed – it was 'like a well oiled machine'. The CQC did also make specific comments about the handover delays, noting staff wellbeing has suffered, that staff reported burnout and they observed two members of staff in tears. They concluded with this comment: "Every single patient we spoke to, who was conveyed by WMAS, had the utmost praise and thanks for the care they received from WMAS staff." Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "Despite some awful circumstances, staff in Worcestershire have done themselves, WMAS and our patients proud. I was particularly pleased that they noted the exceptional work of our cleaners and VPOs who are a vital part in us being able to provide great care to patients."

First Ambulances Dispatched from New Sandwell Hub

November was the start of a new era for staff in the Black Country with the first operational shift departing from the brand new Sandwell Hub. Stores & Distribution, the Hazardous Area Response Team and Merit were the first to move across, followed by frontline crews. Operational Support Service Director, Craig Cooke, said: "The move, has been no small undertaking, but has largely gone without a hitch. As with the other moves, a huge amount of work has gone into making this happen, for which I am immensely grateful. Staff have come from not just West Bromwich, but other hubs too. Ambulances have also been transferred from West Bromwich, Willenhall and a number of other sites, which will clearly provide additional space at those locations. Senior Operations Manager for Sandwell, Liam Slater, and his team have done a great job and there seems to be lots of happy faces as staff get used to the new facilities, which really are first rate. I'd like to again thank all of the teams involved in creating the biggest hub in the country; they should be very proud of their work, as we all are."



Top Stories.....

Congratulations To Our CWG Planning Team

Remember the Commonwealth Games? Whilst they seem a long time ago now as we head into winter, the worldwide event was a fantastic thing to be part of in the West Midlands and a huge challenge for us, as an ambulance service, to respond to. All of the hard work that went into doing so was recognised by West Midlands Police in November when the Trust was given a Partner's Chief Constable Team Award at a ceremony at Tally Ho to recognise our service during the Games. James Williams and Tim Atherton who were on the CWG Planning Team were on hand to collect the accolade. During the 11 days of competition, the team scheduled over 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.



Top Award for 111 Pharmacy Lead

A 111 Pharmacist has scooped a prestigious award at the Chemist + Druggist Annual Awards Ceremony. Khurshid Hussain picked up the 'Manager of the Year' Award for his work in the 111 centre at Navigation Point. The citation said of Pharmacy Lead Khurshid: "He helped recruit, train and develop a group of 62 pharmacists from various backgrounds – community, GP, hospital and mental health – to form a clinical pharmacist workforce.



During COVID-19, Khurshid maintained morale through clear leadership, regular appraisals and feedback and personally trained the team. He also provided mentorship and one-to-one supervision where needed and helped upskill the pharmacist team for subsequent roles, including five advanced clinical practice and four independent prescribing placements. Bringing together and developing pharmacists from different disciplines is no easy feat but Khurshid did so with exceptional leadership and management skills. By promoting the role of pharmacists, Khurshid has created a lasting impression on his team and the wider healthcare system."

Hollie Scoops Apprentice Award

Another year, another win for a WMAS apprentice! Congratulations go to Hollie Tomkins who scooped Apprentice of the Year in the Professional Services category at the Greater Birmingham Apprentice Awards recently. Holly, who is Training Administration Officer at the Academy, is the fourth winner from the service. The awards celebrate individual excellence in six different business sectors offering Apprenticeships. Hollie is currently completing her Advanced Business Administrator Apprenticeship. Hollie was thrilled to win and wanted to thank her tutor Jodie Carter, her manager Liz Williams and all her colleagues at the Academy.



Mark Awarded Honorary Doctorate

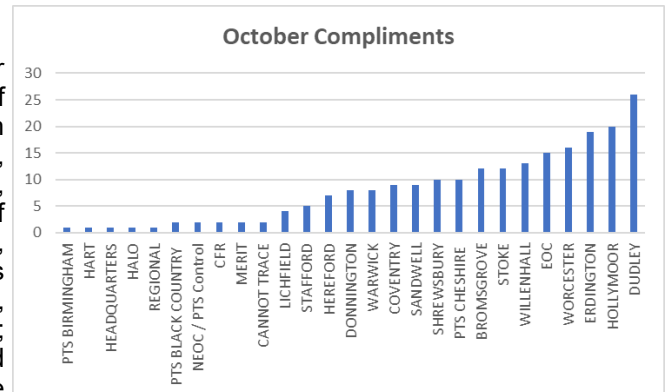
Director of Nursing, Mark Docherty, has been awarded an honorary doctorate from Coventry University for his significant contribution to the field of Nursing. The Doctorate of Science was conferred on him at a ceremony at Coventry Cathedral last month. A finalist in the 1997 Nurse of the Year Awards, Mark has gone on to hold a number of senior clinical posts including positions as Director of Operations. Mark has also played a key role in commissioning before joining the ambulance sector where he has been high profile in his concerns about hospital handover delays. Mark said: "It was a complete surprise, but a real honour that my near 40 years in the NHS has been recognised. However, I could not have done so without the dedication, hard work and support from all the colleagues I have had the pleasure of working alongside over four decades. There were many graduates receiving healthcare degrees, so it was nice to see people starting out in their career and to share their graduation. It was a particularly special day as I had my wife, son, daughter, son-in-law, and my two granddaughters there to celebrate with me."



Top Stories.....

Over 200 Compliments

After a record breaking month in September, October proved to be another month where the number of compliments received by the Trust exceeded the norm. In total, the Trust received 218 compliments via email, letter, social media and the website and in all but two occasions, the individuals who helped the patient received a copy of the compliment. Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "I have had a chance to see some of the messages that have come in and many leave a lump in your throat, such are the emotions contained within the comments; where families explain how staff saved the life of a loved one; how the care they displayed made such a difference to the care of someone with dementia; and so many other touching stories. I have said it before, but we all need to remember during these challenging times; we do make a difference to so many people and we mustn't forget it. I want to thank staff throughout the organisation for their work, whatever their role, because it is only by us all pulling together that we make the difference to our patients."



National News Focuses on Effect Delays Have on Staff

Staffside Lead, Reena Farrington, appeared on a national news item which looked at the impact that the current hospital handover delays are having on ambulance staff. Reena spoke to Emily Morgan from ITV News at the Trust's control centre at Navigation Point. The piece also included an interview with a paramedic from Cambridgeshire, who is also a Unison Rep. In an emotional interview, Reena spoke passionately about the impact the delays have on staff within the control rooms; from the vile abuse call handlers receive from members of the public to the anxiety and stress that dispatchers have when they have multiple outstanding calls and nothing to send. Summing up, Emily described it as a situation where there are no winners, only losers; both patients and staff.



Another ADA Goes Live

The end of November saw another Ambulance Decision Area go live, this time at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. In Shrewsbury, 13 paramedics (pictured left) completed their training and started taking patients from crews into two four bed areas. The Ambulance Healthcare Assistants will join them after undertaking their training in the coming days. They will also be supported by a nurse and healthcare assistant from the hospital. Head of Patient Flow, Nina Mitchell, said: "The mood amongst the paramedics and hospital staff at both sites is very positive. Given the challenges at the hospitals, this development can only go some way to helping the situation." Meanwhile, a second group of Ambulance Health Care Assistants (pictured right) have completed their training and are working hard at hospitals across Birmingham including Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Good Hope Hospital and Heartlands Hospital. Carl Hancox, Ambulance Health Care Assistant said: "Because of this being a brand-new role, it was a learning curve for the training staff and for those at University Hospitals Birmingham. I hope I can speak on behalf of the entire group when I say the training at the Academy was excellent and we are all grateful for Laura Hickman and Russell Ames for delivering it in such a fun and wonderful way."



News.....

We Will Remember Them

Staff and volunteers from across the region took time out of their lives to pay their respects on Armistice Day and also Remembrance Sunday to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Staff and students at The Academy joined Trust Chaplain Vanetta Griffith on Friday, November 11th for a two minute silence at 11am. Then from the biggest parade in Birmingham City Centre to the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall as well as smaller events in Knowle, Warwickshire and Dawley in Telford, it was a time of reflection. This year, there was a notable increase in the number of people joining parades or being there to support them. Operational Support Service Director Craig Cooke, who joined the Trust's Ceremonial Unit in Birmingham, said: "As ever, it is a privilege to represent the ambulance service remembering those who have served or lost their lives. Thank you to all of the other staff and volunteers who represented the Trust at the parades around the region."



Success at the Student Paramedic Entry Assistance Event

On Saturday November 5th, the Trust's Recruitment Team successfully ran a Student Paramedic Entry Assistance event at The National Academy in Brierley Hill. The event was designed to give attendees more information about the student paramedic role, giving them an insight into the interview process, the driving assessments and the fitness assessment, while also allowing hopeful applicants to ask members of the team questions about the role. The event saw more than 120 people book on and express their interest and even more people, who didn't manage to book a place, enquired about the role via the Trust's social media channels. Recruitment Manager, Louise Jones, said: "This was the first event of its kind and I'm really pleased with how well it was received by both staff and potential applicants. Thank you to my colleagues and our external partners for supporting the event, we'll definitely be putting more of these events on in the future as this one proved hugely beneficial."



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News.....

Remembering Jack and Jon

Two trees have been planted in the Memorial Garden at Hereford Hub to remember two much loved colleagues who passed away over the last couple of years. Jon Murray passed away after a brave battle against cancer while Jeremy 'Jack' Daw died in a tragic accident while responding to a patient. Colleagues James Hey, Graham Brookes and Nicky Thomas came up with the idea after the recent TASC (The Ambulance Staff Charity) memorial event at the National Memorial Arboretum. Jon's widow Rachel joined Trust Chief Executive Anthony Marsh and the local management team, James, Graham and Nicky along with Jack's widow Dawn and daughter Kate at the ceremony. Mr Marsh said: "Both Jack and Jon were huge characters at Hereford. Their loss is keenly felt by so many at the hub, so being able to plant these trees seems a fitting way to remember them for all of the staff here."



Senior Operations Manager, Nick Montandon, added: "Both were top grade clinicians and deeply committed to the job. However, both also had extensive interests outside work and as a result were well known to many in the community as well. Anyone who knew them will have fond memories of the time they spent together, so I am delighted that we have been able to remember them in this way."

Phone Box Defib Dedicated to Jack

A large group of family, friends, colleagues and members of the Leominster Community came together to further remember Jeremy 'Jack' Daw in what was probably the most appropriate way possible; with lifesaving equipment. The defibrillator is housed in an old telephone box in Bargates in the town. His widow Dawn called it a "fitting tribute", given his line of work, adding it had made the family proud. She said: "He would be amazed at how many people had sent wishes and done things in his memory; it's just overwhelming."



Ensuring Suppliers Meet D&I Criteria

The Trust is not only committed to ensuring Diversity and Inclusion within our own organisation, but also within the companies who supply products to us. As a result, the Procurement Team recently ran their first Diversity & Inclusion Round Table event with three non-competing suppliers.



Head of Procurement, Joanne Antcliff, said: "It was a great opportunity to share learning, good practice and build networks to continually improve Diversity and Inclusion across WMAS and our supply chains. Thanks to Laura Johnson from my team, People Director Carla Beechey and D&I Lead Mohammed Ramzan for helping at the event where Veolia, Jays Sourcing and Bunzl took part. I am pleased that they were not only interested but keen to ensure diversity and inclusion is a key part of their organisations too."

News.....

New Role for Graeme and Karl Returns

With Graeme Jones (left) having been appointed Head of Corporate Efficiency within the Clinical and Commissioning Team, Karl McGilligan has returned to WMAS to take up the role of Head of Public Health and IPC. Karl returned to the Trust with added experience of IPC from the Acute sector and has recently completed a Masters Degree in Public Health. Looking forward to developing IPC beyond Covid, Karl said: "I am pleased to be back with the Trust and look forward to meeting everyone at sites across the region over the coming months." Graeme has worked with the Trust for 12 years, initially joining as a student paramedic. He has a strong background in finance and accountancy and said: "This role feels like a great opportunity to deal with some of the challenges the Trust is currently facing and I am really looking forward to getting started."



Trust Welcomes New Head of Financial Management

With finance in the NHS ever more important with the current cost of living crisis, it is perhaps pertinent that the Trust has been able to recruit a new Head of Financial Management. Kim da Silva is a qualified accountant who originally trained and qualified in audit within a charity audit team in London. Her most recent role was at University Hospitals of North Midlands as Head of Financial Management, but prior to that worked as a Divisional Finance Manager and Divisional Business Advisor supporting numerous operational divisions at the Trust. Kim said: "I am very much looking forward to the challenge of joining WMAS and working with the team." As well as a busy family life, Kim also helps the local cricket club with food, finances and events – although hasn't quite progressed to taking up bat and pads ... yet!



Nursing Cadets Get an Insight into the Ambulance Service

Last month, the first three RCN Prince of Wales Nursing Cadets had placements at The National Academy. Dawud Sheikh, Alicia and Sophie Fereday from The Royal School in Wolverhampton took part in the placements where they spent time participating in classroom sessions for the Student Paramedic programme and also went out with the driver training team and had an insight into the Ambulance Health Care Assistant programme. The placement scheme provides learning insight into the different healthcare careers and hopes to improve the participants' confidence, knowledge and skills. Anne Marie Atherton, regional lead for the scheme said: "I'm so thankful of the service and those at the training academy for this excellent learning opportunity and experience given to the students."



24 Hours in the Black Country

Recently, the Trust took part in #BlackCountryHealth247 on Twitter. The event aimed to give health organisations in the Black Country an opportunity to shine a light on some of their roles and on the hard work that staff do each day in a typical 24 hour period. As part of the event, the Trust showcased some of the lesser known roles such as Vehicle Preparation Operatives, Patient Transport Service and the Clinical Validation Team within three four hour slots. It goes without saying that these are only a select few of the amazing lesser known



roles at the Trust, and there are plans to highlight many more of the service's unsung heroes in the coming months.

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WMAS Round-Up

November 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



148,774 emergency contacts (inc. all 999 calls, duplicates, events & 111 referrals). **6.8% increase** on Nov '21




84,425 unique incidents
Average of 2,814 a day
7.8% decrease on Nov '21




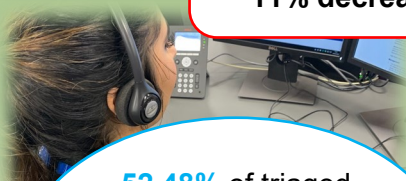
30,164 hours lost due to regional hospital handover delays **20.4% increase** on Nov '21



Hear & Treat
13,531 patients treated over the phone
11% decrease on Nov '21



See & Convey
45,403 patients conveyed for further treatment
6.9% decrease on Nov '21





NHS 111


52.48% of triaged calls recommended to contact primary care. Compared to 49.9% in Nov '21



57% calls answered within 60 seconds. Compared to 14.2% in Nov '21




10.1% of triaged calls resulted in an ambulance. Down from 11.2% in Nov '21




Patient Transport Service



73,289 journeys undertaken across all contracts
3.7% increase on Nov '21



35,342 Renal journeys (inc. aborted)
5.7% increase on Nov '21



3,991 aborted journeys
26.4% increase on Nov '21

