



MONTHLY Briefing

October 2022



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OfficialWMAS

AMBULANCE LIFESAVERS MEET BABY GIRL WHO DEFIED THE ODDS

The family of a baby who survived after being delivered by emergency caesarean section following complications in June have met the four ambulance staff who came to their aid...page 4



Also this month....Staff Begin Move to Sandwell Hub; Record Levels of Compliments; Extraordinary Efforts of Control Room Staff; Trust Retains Disability Confident Leader Status and much more....

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Top Stories.....

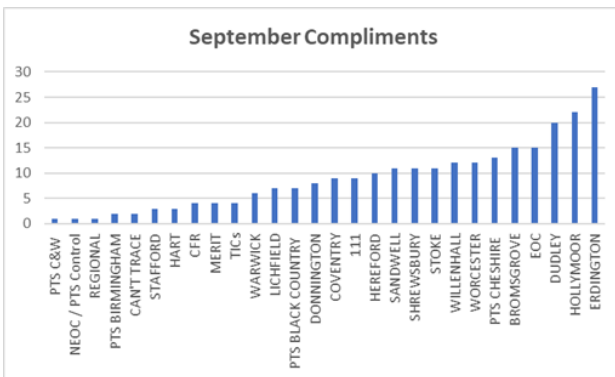
Staff Begin Move to Sandwell Hub

After around a year of building work, staff moved into what is Britain's largest ambulance hub in October. The first to move to the new site in Oldbury were Stores and Distribution, Fleet and the Trust's Hazardous Area Response Team. The staff based at the current Sandwell Hub in West Bromwich began moving in at the start of November. Education and Training will start moving from mid-November onwards. Operational Support Services Director, Craig Cooke, said: "A huge amount of work has been put into getting this hub ready for staff. It has been a huge undertaking and takes the level of accommodation we have within the Trust to a new level, which I hope staff will enjoy over the next 30 years. It is by far the biggest hub that we have. For staff moving from West Bromwich, I am sure they will appreciate the additional space that they have at the new hub. I'd like to thank all of the teams, but in particular Estates and other project staff for their work in getting the Hub ready for staff."



Record Levels of Compliments

At a time when the Trust continues to be under intense pressure, the work of ambulance staff has never been more appreciated by the public. During September, no fewer than 250 compliments were received by letter, email, social media and via the website. The Trust has been able to identify the staff in all but two of them with copies of the compliment being sent to individuals. Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "It really is humbling that so many people are taking the time to send in compliments when you consider just how challenging it is at the moment. I am certain that every member of staff that has received a compliment will be delighted that their efforts have been recognised. For those who haven't received a letter; they should be under no illusion that the work they do is making a difference to individuals in our communities every single day. Please also accept my thanks; I know just how hard it is at the moment, and therefore the extraordinary lengths that they are all going to, to make a difference to our patients."



Extraordinary Efforts of Control Room Staff

October saw International Control Room week take place, but there is no question that the work of the staff in Integrated Emergency and Urgent Care (IEUC) is phenomenal every week. As the data below shows, the team are consistently performing at the highest level in the country, week in, week out. During September, 18.3% of 999 calls were duplicate, with the vast majority asking for an ETA of the ambulance, though on some days, when hospital delays are particularly bad, that figure has reached 30%. IEUC and Performance Director, Jeremy Brown, said: "Once again this is a set of metrics that shows just how hard staff are working in the control rooms. No-one should be under any illusions as to just how tough it is. I want to place on record how proud I am of the team who keep performing better than any other ambulance service in the country. It is difficult at the moment, but they should all be very proud of themselves."

	Emergency Call Numbers	Call Answer: Mean	Call Answer: 95th centile	Address Match: % in under 60"
April 2022	135,356	0:03	0:13	79.2%
May 2022	127,418	0:02	0:02	79.6%
June 2022	134,548	0:05	0:25	79.8%
July 2022	142,659	0:08	0:36	78.8%
August 2022	121,315	0:04	0:18	77.4%
September 2022	122,227	0:05	0:22	77.4%

Top Stories.....

Trust Retains Disability Confident Leader Status

The Trust was pleased to learn in October that it had been reaccredited with Disability Confident Leader status for another three years. Having first been awarded the status in 2019, the Trust had to submit evidence in two key themes to ensure revalidation, which were 'getting the right people for your business' and 'keeping and developing your people'. To evidence this, the Trust submitted an 18-page document which was validated by the Trust's Diversity and Inclusion Steering Action Group. Within the documentation, the Trust was able to highlight improvements and additional services offered since the original accreditation was given. This includes a new Health and Wellbeing website, inclusive and flexible recruitment processes, a vast array of training and awareness programmes, implementation of the Disability, Carers and Advocates (DCA) Network and supportive management processes in partnership with HR colleagues. Chair of the DCA, John Eames, said: "This is great news for the Trust and for our staff who identify as having a disability. It provides a firm foundation for the DCA to continue its work of mutual support to staff and to further raise awareness of all disabilities throughout the trust. Awareness of disability is something for everyone, staff can have a hidden disability of which colleagues may be unaware." People Director, Carla Beechey, said: "We have worked incredibly hard as an organisation during the last three years to ensure we have made improvements to the position we were in when first awarded the status, rather than just resting on our laurels. This includes considering and putting numerous reasonable adjustments for members of staff in place and honoured where possible and this can mean varying many things to different people and roles. Whether that is changes of hours or shift patterns, adjusting duties, providing additional mentorship or additional equipment / resources if required. Thank you to everyone for the part they have played in making all of these changes possible and continuing to support us to be an inclusive employer of choice."

You Helped Keep the Athletes, Teams and the Public Safe

The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner has written to the Trust to thank the organisation and staff for their work during the Commonwealth Games. In his letter to Trust Chief Executive Anthony Marsh, Simon Foster said: "Thank you so much for your support during the Commonwealth Games. Your contribution was integral to ensuring the safety and successful delivery of the entire Games experience. There was a significant amount of planning to ensure a secure and friendly Games. The support provided by the Ambulance Service helped to keep the athletes, their teams and the public safe. I am grateful for the invaluable support provided, through the long working hours your staff dedicated themselves to. The Games had a positive impact on all of our communities. In particular, the coming-together of nations enabled us to celebrate the people of 180 nationalities that reside within our city. It was a pleasure, an honour and a privilege to have given the world an opportunity to celebrate together with us. Birmingham and the West Midlands rose to the occasion and the Games were a fantastic success. The Ambulance Service played a major role in that. I commend your team on the invaluable contribution made to collectively achieving that outcome. We could not have achieved what we did, without each and every member of that team."

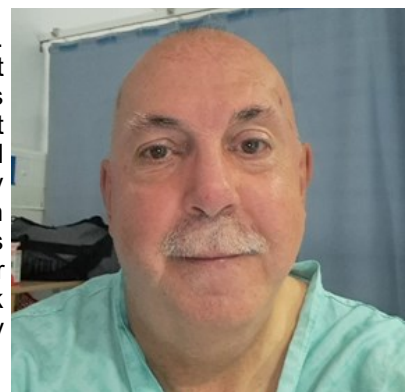


west midlands
police and crime
commissioner



Michael Thanks Colleagues Who Saved His Life

A Bromsgrove Technician has paid tribute to the colleagues who saved his life. Last month, Michael Redmond was at a category one call along with Consultant Paramedic Matt Ward, when he collapsed and suffered a cardiac arrest. His crew mate Joe Pollard and Matt immediately provided advanced life support while the MERIT team, a second ambulance, Operations Manager and Tactical Incident Commander provided care to the original patient. Mick was rapidly transferred to Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham where medics were on standby. Mick has made an excellent recovery so far and wanted to pass on his thanks to those who helped him. He said: "A big thanks to all my colleagues for their exceptional care they gave me. I'm doing fine but I wanted to say thank you for all of the messages of good wishes people have sent – it really is very much appreciated."



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Top Stories.....

Ambulance Lifesavers Meet Baby Girl who Defied the Odds

Last month, Natasha Lyndon, her partner Chris and their 16-week old daughter, Adelaide from Solihull had an emotional reunion with the crews who came to their aid in June when Natasha started bleeding heavily at home. Paramedic Richard Brennan and Technician Francesca Pinder from Erdington Hub together with paramedic Adil-Islam Choudhury and Technician Chloe Cooper from Hollymoor Hub, attended the Category 1 emergency. Natasha was conveyed to Heartlands Hospital due to a placental abruption where Adelaide was delivered by an emergency caesarean section ten-weeks premature; she stayed on the neonatal ward for 61 days. Adelaide has since defied the odds and is now breathing without oxygen support and is making progress each day. Upon recovering in hospital, Natasha made it her mission to get in touch with the service to pass her thanks to the crews who helped her, which led to them being reunited at Warwick Ambulance Hub. Francesca said: "With a job like this one, we really didn't think the chances of a positive outcome were high. Even less did we think we'd be able to see Tash, Chris and Adelaide like this today. It's so rewarding and such an honour." Natasha added: "If the crews had not been so quick thinking and efficient at getting us safely to hospital, Adelaide and myself would not be alive today. There are not enough words to say how grateful Chris and I are for their actions on that night, we really are incredibly grateful."



Ruby Awarded for Bravery After Making a Lifesaving 999 Call

It was a very proud day for Mum, Stacey and for her daughter Ruby when Tollgate Operations Managers, Andrew Fox and Ricky Evans arrived to present Ruby with a certificate of outstanding bravery for her quick thinking in calling 999 when her mum suffered anaphylaxis at home. Eleven year old Ruby was able to grab her Mum's EpiPens and medication while making the emergency call. Ricky said: "It gave us great pleasure to present Ruby with her well-deserved certificate. Ruby administered EpiPens to her mother who was having a severe anaphylactic reaction at the time, despite it being the first time Ruby had done this. She then called 999 and contacted her relatives as there were no other adults in the house. Ruby's life saving actions undoubtedly contributed to her mothers full recovery." Andrew added: "Ruby demonstrated bravery and acted calmly under pressure, looking after her mum and her siblings, whilst calling 999 for the ambulance and arranging family to come and look after them. Her quick thinking and actions led to saving her mum's life."



Governors Come Together for Development Day

The Trust's Council of Governors came together for their annual Development Day in October. The day offers the Governors a more informal session to learn all about a range of aspects of the Trust. The topics included presentations on the Staff Survey, Freedom to Speak Up, Trust Recruitment, a Tour of the National Training Academy, Integrated Care System updates and CPR and Defib training. Prof. Ian Cumming, Trust Chairman, said: "The Development Day offers a great opportunity for the Governors to come together outside of the formal meetings and learn more in depth about a whole host of subjects. The sessions often focus on areas that the Governors have identified of interest during their more formal Council Meetings and sessions that the Trust has developed specifically to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. It provides a great opportunity have open discussions and conversations, explore new ideas and provides further opportunities for the Governors to get involved with current Trust activities."



News.....

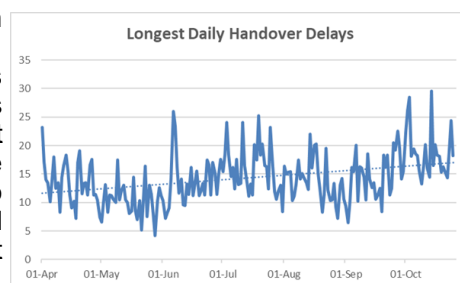
What Happens to Our Patients?

One of the questions asked at an All Staff Briefing in October was ‘what happens to our patients; how do we compare to other services; and could we be doing more to help reduce the delays at hospitals’. The short answer is that staff are already working really hard to avoid patients being taken to an Emergency Department when the patient does not need emergency care, as the figures in the table demonstrate. WMAS Medical Director, Dr Alison Walker, said: “While it is absolutely the right thing to do to reduce the number of patients being taken to ED, we have to make sure that the right patients are being referred to alternative care pathways, other health providers, managed at home following the JRCALC and WMAS clinical guidelines with appropriate clinical safety-netting advice, or being dealt with over the phone only. We are monitoring the clinical data very closely and there are some patterns that are emerging which suggest that we need to carry on refining the process so that each patient gets what is best for them. There is no question that we have made tremendous improvements, but we need to make sure that we continue to follow our clinical guidelines to ensure each patient gets the right care in the right place and we maintain our focus on patient safety.”

	Hear & Treat	See & Treat	Non Conveyed	Convey to non-ED	Convey to ED	Convey overall
Percentage	16.1%	30.6%	46.7%	5.2%	48.1%	53.3%
Position	1st	8th	2nd	3rd	2nd	2nd

Delays Continue to Worsen

New figures show that the level of long delays continues to worsen. In October, the Trust experienced the worst delay on record at 29 hours 51 minutes. August saw delays reduce with the result that response times improved. Sadly, the challenges facing our acute trust colleagues has steadily deteriorated. Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: “I can but apologise once again to my staff who have been so badly impacted by these delays. Long handovers, delayed mealbreaks and late finishes are far too common and I understand how disruptive these are to staff’s lives. We will continue to work at finding practical solutions but once again, I am sorry that we have not made more progress despite lobbying at the highest level.”



UHB Cohorting Scheme Already Seeing Results

It may be a relatively new scheme, but the early signs are that the use of cohort paramedics at the three University Hospital Birmingham (UHB) sites is proving very positive. Across Heartlands, Good Hope and the QE, a total of 1,224 patients received care and treatment by the paramedics in the ambulance decision area (ADA) over the first 17 days of the scheme.

Hospital	Pt through ADA	Patients Conveyed	Percentage
Heartlands	477	1,568	30.4%
Queen Elizabeth	516	1,802	28.6%
Good Hope	231	1,058	21.8%
Total	1,224	4,428	27.6%

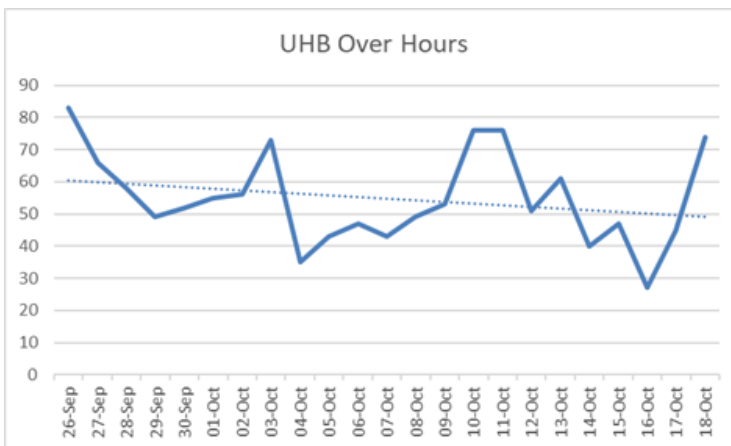
WMAS Head of Patient Flow, Nina Mitchell, said: “These figures show that we can see a steady decrease in the number of ambulances delayed, which is clearly good news. What is also apparent is that on a number of occasions, conveyance has gone up quite significantly to the three hospitals. What this indicates is that the Strategic Capacity Cell is not having to divert so many patients over to City Hospital, for example, as each of the University Hospital Birmingham sites has been able to deal with the number of patients presenting at A&E, which is even better news. What you also have to remember is that the scheme is not working at full capacity yet; each site only has one member of WMAS staff. The second tranche of paramedics along with the first tranche of Ambulance Health Care Assistants joined the teams recently following their training, so hopefully that will bring further improvements to the figures above.”

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News.....

UHB Thanks Staff for Work on ADA Units

As part of the new Ambulance Decision Area scheme, the Trust's Medical Director, Dr Alison Walker, and Consultant Paramedic for Emergency Care, Jason Wiles, visited the ADAs at the Queen Elizabeth and Heartlands Hospitals. After spending time talking to staff who were at Heartlands A&E they met with UHBs' Divisional Medical Director, Trust Clinical Director for EDs and other senior clinicians. Dr Walker said: "Even though the units aren't fully operational, they are clearly releasing more ambulances to respond to calls. The team at UHB really appreciate all of the work WMAS staff are doing to look after patients and are incredibly grateful for the hard work and speed staff have worked at to get the new units up and running. There are a few areas that still need improving, including IT access and screening, but we are working with UHB to quickly resolve these issues. When I visited on a Monday afternoon, we would normally have expected to see a large queue of ambulances, but there were only two at Heartlands and not many more at the QE! The staff I spoke to agreed that the ambulance handovers were shorter since the scheme started which improves our ability to provide emergency care for the next patient in the community."



The Success of ADAs Leads to Expansion Plans

With the early indications showing that the Ambulance Decision Areas at the three University Hospital Birmingham sites are proving very effective at reducing hospital handover delays, plans are in place to expand it. The scheme sees a Band 7 paramedic, who has had additional training, working with an Ambulance Healthcare Assistant inside the hospital to help free ambulance crews to go and respond to the next patient. As a result of the early success of the scheme, WMAS has been approached by other ambulance trusts about the project and last month, both Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals and Worcester Acute Hospitals confirmed that they would like to work on similar schemes. Non-Emergency Services Operations Delivery & Improvement Director, Michelle Brotherton, said: "We are still in the early stages of the project with UHB, but the initial signs are very positive. It is also great news that both Shropshire and Worcestershire want to roll out similar schemes to tackle their delays."

Category 2 Clinical Review to Start

When the Ambulance response Programme started, around 40% of calls were triaged as Category 2. Today, that number is around 55% as a number of conditions were upgraded from the original categories. The net effect is that this group of calls is now so large that it makes getting to Category 3 calls in a timely manner almost impossible and also impacts on our ability to respond to time critical category 2 calls. As a result of a national Clinical Review, a new process has started from the beginning of November where a proportion of Category 2 calls have been identified as suitable for clinical navigation. It means that cases such as heart attacks and strokes will be prioritised in an attempt to get to those patients who need an emergency response more quickly. WMAS has been chosen by NHS England to take a lead on the project. Trust Medical Director, Dr Alison Walker, said: "The trial will see about 20% of Category 2 calls triaged by the Clinical Validation Team which will allow them to get a better clinical understanding of how time sensitive they are. The ultimate aim of this initiative is to provide clinical evidence that more calls currently coded as Category 2 can safely sit within Category 3. If the project is successful, more patients who are critically ill will get a faster response."



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Trust Studies Best Practice at Race Equality Code Conference

A large group of staff from WMAS took part in a Race Equality Code conference designed to look at ways that organisations can eradicate all forms of racial discrimination. The group which included senior managers, directors, a non-executive director, HR, union colleagues and the Trust's ONE (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) network chair met with other NHS organisations in Dudley. The RACE Equality Code is an additional voluntary framework where an organisation can benchmark their performance against indicators which have been developed by the Race Equality team, an independent group that sits outside of the NHS. People Director, Carla Beechey, said: "The group attended a wide range of workshops and listening to speakers presenting innovative solutions about how we can all address race equality issues. The conference provided an insight into how other Trusts are performing and was an excellent opportunity to network with local and regional Trusts in sharing ideas and best practice. We all left invigorated to re-double our efforts to stamp out racism wherever it appears."



999 Day is Celebrated

Last month, people across the region honoured those who serve in the NHS and emergency services on 999 Day. It usually takes place on the 9th September but was postponed due to the passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. It is an opportunity to pay tribute to the almost two million people who work and volunteer across the NHS and emergency services. The event formally begins with 999 Day flags being raised at 9am on the 9th day of the 9th month, followed by two minutes' silence to remember the more than 7,500 members of the emergency services killed in the line of duty and the many more killed as a result of their service. Lichfield Operations Manager, Mark Hayes, attended Staffordshire Police HQ to observe the flag raising and said: "While we are fortunate to be the only ambulance service not to have lost staff to COVID-19, many of us have suffered personal loss making their journey to work that little bit harder." Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, added: "No-one can be under any illusion about the scale of the challenge the NHS and our ambulance service staff, and volunteers have faced over the last few years. Never have we faced such danger in carrying out our duty to serve and protect the West Midlands. I want to thank each and every member of staff for doing so much to help your colleagues, your patients and our community every single day."



New Non-Executive Director is Welcomed

The Trust was pleased to welcome Julie Jasper as a Non-Executive Director last month. Julie was interviewed for the position in August by a panel consisting of the Trust's Chairman, Prof Ian Cumming and members of the Council of Governors including Lead Governor Eileen Cox; Staff Governor Adam Aston; and Public Governor John Davies. The panel unanimously agreed to recommend the appointment to the Council of Governors who approved this recommendation. Julie, who is a qualified accountant, brings with her a wealth of experience. With a career spanning over four decades, Julie has undertaken numerous senior roles including management, executive director and non-executive director roles within large organisations both in the public and private sector. For the last 15 years Julie's principal focus has been fulfilling her role as a Non-Executive Director / Lay Member within the NHS. Talking about her appointment, Julie said: "I am very excited to be joining the Trust and look forward to working with and meeting as many people as possible over the coming months. Hopefully, my experience and passion for the NHS, will mean that I can make a positive contribution to the workings and strategic direction of the Trust and help prepare it for the challenges that it, and the NHS generally, face now and in the future".





WMAS Round-Up

October 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



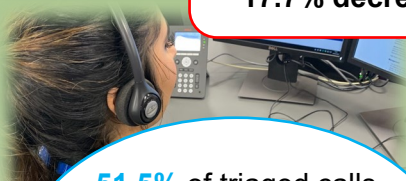
166,503 emergency contacts (inc. all 999 calls, duplicates, events & 111 referrals). **4.7% increase** on Oct '21

83,429 unique incidents
Average of 2,691 a day
14.6% decrease on Oct '21

39,795 hours lost due to regional hospital handover delays
37.5% increase on Oct '21

Hear & Treat
14,131 patients treated over the phone
17.7% decrease on Oct '21

See & Convey
43,897 patients conveyed for further treatment
14.4% decrease on Oct '21



NHS 111

51.5% of triaged calls recommended to contact primary care. Compared to 53.6% in Oct '21

50% calls answered within 60 seconds. Compared to 7.1% in Oct '21

10.4% of triaged calls resulted in an ambulance. Up from 9.2% in Oct '21

Patient Transport Service



71,468 journeys undertaken across all contracts
4.5% increase on Oct '21

35,513 Renal journeys (inc. aborted)
6.2% increase on Oct '21

3,737 aborted journeys
36.5% increase on Oct '21