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## Digital Magazine

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AW169 arrives**

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NEAS PTS apprentices hit  
the road**

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**PTS**  
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# Welcome...

**N**orth East Ambulance Service's (NEAS) pilot scheme to reduce the number of patients attending Sunderland's A&E departments has proved so successful it is being extended. Funded by the All Together Better Sunderland vanguard partnership, NEAS's Paramedic Pathfinder has helped more than 800 patients avoid lengthy A&E waits by diverting them to more appropriate places for treatment. See page 8 for full story.

Last month the Welsh Ambulance Service celebrated Father's Day by shining a spotlight on all the amazing Dads in the organisation - and the children who followed in their footsteps. Turn to page 14 to find out more.

Many readers participate in challenging events to raise money for charity and this

month starting on page 20 we highlight some of the exploits including a sky high wing walk!

We have a rich blend of news from Ambulance services around the UK including the new hub for North Staffs, Air ambulance news and training including an article on child pain management. We also feature a number of frontline people so see if you can spot any of your colleagues.

We hope you enjoy reading this month's magazine and if there is anything you would like featured or if you have any comments please get in touch-my contact details are opposite.

See you next month.

*Jill Bareham*

**Editor**

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# NEAS pilot extended as lengthy A&E waits avoided

**A** North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) pilot scheme to reduce the number of patients attending Sunderland's A&E departments has proved so successful it is being extended.

Funded by the All Together Better Sunderland vanguard partnership, NEAS's Paramedic Pathfinder has helped more than 800 patients avoid lengthy A&E waits by diverting them to more appropriate places for treatment.

Since the pilot began last September, instead of being taken to A&E 815 people have been successfully referred to alternative care providers in Sunderland, including: GPs, Urgent Care Centres, The Recovery at Home Team, The Palliative Care Team and The Emergency Ambulatory Care Unit at Sunderland Royal Hospital.

Due to its success, NEAS has now secured funding to continue the Pathfinder scheme in Sunderland for another 12 months and is looking at ways to extend it further.

Pathfinder involved the training

of around 100 NEAS ambulance clinicians to use a groundbreaking clinical triage tool for patient assessments. The pathfinder triage tool works by enabling clinicians to recognise symptoms rather than the need to make a definitive diagnosis. Ambulance clinicians work from the top of the Paramedic Pathfinder flow chart to the bottom and must eliminate all other possibilities before going onto the next step. This helps them make extremely accurate face-to-face patient assessments and confidently choose the most suitable place for treatment.

As well as improving the patient's experience by providing care tailored exactly to their needs, Pathfinder is helping to significantly reduce the load on Sunderland's A&E departments.

Libby Hodges, unit manager for

emergency ambulatory care at City Hospitals Sunderland, said: "We know paramedics have a huge amount of knowledge and experience, which they are now able to utilise much more by using their clinical judgement alongside the Pathfinder tool, making the whole process quicker, smoother and ultimately better for our patients."

"The types of patients we see in our department are people who need to be assessed but don't require emergency care. By allowing them direct access to our department, paramedics are able to bring patients straight to us for assessment, avoiding a wait in a busy A&E for the patient and taking the pressure off the emergency department."

Paul Aitken Fell, Consultant Paramedic at the North East Ambulance Service said: "With a 47% increase in emergency admissions over the past fifteen years, we urgently need to look at ways to reduce this figure."

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# s are reduced delays

That's why we're delighted to secure more funding to enable our Pathfinder scheme to continue for another 12 months.

"Pathfinder isn't a silver bullet but it's definitely a start. The scheme is working particularly well in Sunderland where there's a good choice of alternative care providers and it's great to see more than 800 patients avoiding a lengthy wait in A&E and getting the care most appropriate to their needs.

"Our ambulance clinicians will err on the side of caution when taking patients with non-critical conditions to A&E but Pathfinder is giving them the confidence and endorsement to choose another option and ensure patients get the right care, in the right place, at the right time".

Philip Foster, Chief Officer, Sunderland Care and Support and Chair of the All Together Better vanguard partnership



• **NEAS Consultant Paramedic Paul Aitken Fell**

said:

"All Together Better Sunderland - the programme bringing health and social care services together for local residents - is funding this work to expand the Pathfinder scheme even further.

"The scheme provides a seamless link to a range of services available in the community to paramedic clinicians, as an alternative to taking a patient to the Accident and Emergency Department. These Out of Hospital services

include the 24/7 Recovery at Home a service that offers short term specialist support for patients and the Community integrated Health and Social Care teams focused on enabling the patient to be treated and supported in the community if they do not need to be in hospital.

"Using the Pathfinder scheme, NEAS and All Together Better Sunderland can increase safe care, closer to home and avoid unnecessary admission into hospital."

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# Bigger and better hub

**A**mbulance staff in North Staffordshire have welcomed the opening of their new base, which replaces the previous one that had been open for 55 years.

The new site in Etruria, Stoke, replaces the Broomhall Centre in Hilton Road.

At 19,000 square feet, it is the biggest ambulance hub in the West Midlands and will be the operating base for around 250 staff and more than 50 ambulances.

Senior Operations Manager, Mark Chapman, said: "This new facility is a state of the art centre which will ensure West Midlands Ambulance Service can continue to provide one of the best ambulance services in the country.

"It is a far cry from the previous site which was far too small and no longer fit for purpose.

"The hub is much bigger than the previous site and has been designed to provide a much more pleasant working environment for our staff.

"Using the latest design and technology it will



• **WMAS Hub in Etruria, Stoke**

reduce our running costs, which means we can put more money into frontline care. The location gives us excellent access through the area and it combines fantastic facilities for staff.

"The hub has fleet workshops, Ambulance Fleet Assistants who clean, stock and prepare the vehicles, excellent facilities for training and a computer room that will allow staff to complete online training when they are not responding to emergency calls."

# Lottery celebrations

**I**n what feels like a win of epic proportions, East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust Stalham and Smallburgh community first responders (CFRs) have received £9,503 in grant funding from the Big Lottery Fund.

The fund gives grants to organisations in the UK to help improve their communities, with money awarded coming from the UK National Lottery.

Speaking about the grant, group Deputy Coordinator Tim Thirst said: "It's reassuring to patients and their families to be seen first by someone they may already know in the community. This grant will enable us to expand our commitment and encourage more members of the community to train as an ambulance first responder. It

will also assist us to update older pieces of equipment. We recently spent more than £4,000 on new equipment, but more is required."

In a typical year the Stalham CFR group volunteer 8,000 hours of their own time attending close to 200 patients. This year those figures are already showing a steady increase, with the group attending more calls in the first half of this year when compared with the same period in 2016.

And the group's achievements

have not gone unnoticed. In the last few years their members have received long-service awards, an out-standing achievement award and a Chief Officer's Commendation. Last year, came one of the highest accolades given to any group in the country, when they received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

Norman Lamb, MP for North Norfolk said: "I am thrilled by this news. I know they are a highly dedicated group of people. This award will help them, keep us, safe. Congratulations to them on securing this funding."

**WIN**

# THE RCAT RANGE

from



**Ambulance Life and Medical Aide Memoire have teamed up for a special one off competition.**

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2. Retweet/quote the #RCAT #Competition tweets. Please mention @medicalaidememo & @AmbLifeneews in your retweet.

The winner will be selected at random from the retweets made before and up to 4th August 2017. Prizes are non-transferable and No cash alternative will be offered.

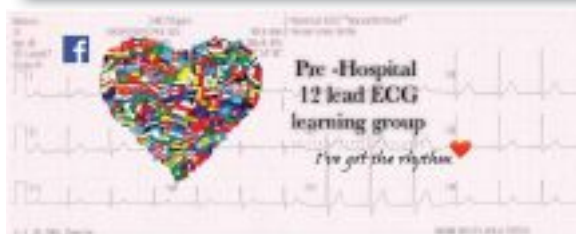
**NB** Existing followers are included in the draw (so please make sure you retweet/quote #RCAT #Competition tweets and mention @medicalaidememo & @AmbLifeneews in your tweets too.)

## The prize includes:

- RCAT badge
- RCAT window
- RCAT-12 Stemi
- RCAT Arrhythmia booklet

*and as this is a special one off competition we have also included the RCR booklet and EtCO2 badge.*

Retail prize value is £68.00



**Medical Aide Memoire is proud to support the excellent 12 lead ECG - I've got the rhythm Facebook learning forum."**

# Jail for frequent 999 caller

A man from Leicestershire has been sentenced to another 10 weeks in prison after making 152 false calls to EMAS in four months.

Dominic Thomas, who was sentenced to 19 weeks in prison in December last year for misuse of the 999 service, continued to repeatedly call EMAS on his release on 13 February.

Joanne Munro, Frequent Callers Clinician for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, explained that despite the police working with Thomas on his release from prison in February to secure better accommodation and support for him, EMAS was left with no choice but to prosecute him again for misusing the service.

Since his release, he has called the service 152 times, resulting in five ambulances being sent to him and costing the service £5,942.

He appeared at Leicester Magistrates Court on Tuesday, 6 June, where he pleaded guilty to the persistent use of a public communication network to cause annoyance, inconvenience and anxiety.

Mr Thomas also pleaded guilty to assaulting a constable in their line of duty. He

was sentenced to 10 weeks in prison, and told to pay £115 to victim services and £85 court costs.

She said: "There are many patients who repeatedly call 999 and our team are often able to intervene and work with our local NHS and social care partners and police to understand why the patient is frequently calling and put pathways in place to make sure their health needs are met in a different way."

"We have tried to support Mr Thomas by working with the police and probation. Unfortunately, in the end we had to give statements to the police regarding his calls because they were a danger to the public as he was calling so frequently and preventing people with genuine emergencies from getting through to us."



"We will continue to prosecute those who misuse our service to ensure that the support is there for those who need it in a real medical emergency."

Since we identified him as a frequent caller in February 2015, Thomas has called EMAS a total of 1,137 times.

A care plan was put in place in February 2015 to reduce the number of times he receives an ambulance.

## THE RCAT RANGE

from

MAM  
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see page 7 or [click here for more details](#)



# App funding

**N**orth East Ambulance Service (NEAS) has secured funding to partner with the GoodSAM smartphone app to support the region's residents who suffer cardiac arrest.

It is one of five projects to receive follow on funding from Nesta and the Office for Civil Society as part of the Centre for Social Action Innovation Fund. As a result, volunteer responders, including off duty paramedics and community first responders, will soon be able to register to be automatically alerted by the GoodSAM Responder app on their smartphones, when someone has a cardiac arrest nearby, along with the location of the nearest defibrillator.

Already trialled and making a difference in London with the London Ambulance Service, GoodSAM (Good Smartphone Activated Medics) developers have built the system, using the latest technology. GoodSAM Responders will be alerted when a member of the public dials 999 in the North East to report a suspected cardiac arrest or triggers an alert via the GoodSAM Alerter app.

Gareth Campbell, Emergency Care Operations Manager says: "This is excellent news for the North East population and means that those special skills our workforce uses every day to help save lives are even more accessible."

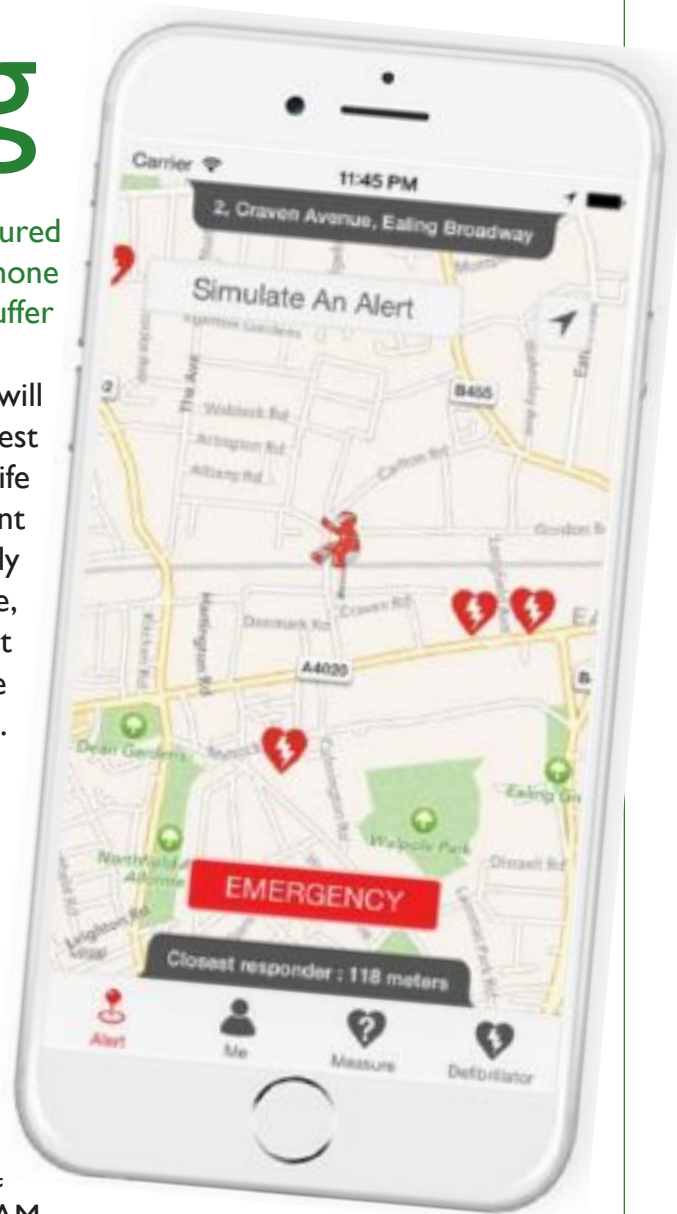
Once available for qualified first aid trained professionals to register, the NEAS

operations centre will alert the three nearest responders to the life threatening incident and simultaneously dispatch an ambulance, giving the patient the best possible chance of survival. The partnership will not impact on or substitute standard ambulance dispatch, with crews continuing to be sent to scene in the usual way.

When a volunteer is alerted, they will be able to accept the alert via the GoodSAM app and make their way to the location of the incident. If a volunteer responder is not in a position to accept the alert, it can be declined and diverted to the next nearest responder.

Campbell continues: "Having seen how successfully this app works in London, we are keen to bring GoodSAM to the North East for the benefit of our region's patients. Thanks to this funding we are able to work in partnership with the GoodSAM team to bring this app to the North East."

Professor Mark Wilson, GoodSAM's Medical Director and Co-Founder, said: "If a



arrest, it is the first few minutes after the incident that determine the outcome - life, death, or long-term brain damage".

"There are first aid trained people all around us but usually the first they know of a neighbour having a cardiac arrest is an ambulance appearing in their street. If they had known and started CPR a few minutes prior to the ambulance arriving, chances of survival can be considerably increased. GoodSAM now makes this possible, connecting those with the skills to the public in their minute of need."

# Out of hospital cardiac arrest plan



**A** new plan de-signed to improve a person's chance of survival and recovery following an out of hospital cardiac arrest in Wales has been published by Health Secretary Vaughan Gething.

The Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OCHA) Plan sets out the key actions that should be taken to improve a person's chance of survival from cardiac arrest.

Called the Chain of Survival, actions include:

- Prompt recognition and call for help;
- Early CPR to buy time;
- Early defibrillation to restart the heart;
- Rapid access to advanced resuscitation;
- Prompt, high quality post resuscitation care;
- Transport to the nearest appropriate hospital;
- Co-ordinated rehabilitation services.

In addition to the Chain of Survival, the OHCA plan highlights the positives of promoting life saving skills within schools and confirms all learners in Wales can learn about emergency aid procedures through Personal and Social Education (PSE).

The plan also encourages the use of fire crews and other rescue services to attend and respond to OHCA until the arrival of ambulance services. This has been shown to improve response times and patient outcomes

As part of the on-going implementation the plan, further work will be undertaken to map out organisations that provide CPR training within

communities across Wales. This will help ensure that people Wales are not only given every opportunity to survive a cardiac arrest, but they also have access to CPR skills and resources such as defibrillators enabling them to save lives.

Vaughan Gething said: "I would like to thank all of those who have worked together and been involved in the development of this plan.

"Between April 2016 and March 2017, the Welsh Ambulance Service responded to 5,800 OHCA of which 2,832 resulted in a resuscitation attempt.

"Survival rates are currently low but there is the potential for many more lives to be saved if cardiopulmonary resuscitation and early defibrillation were undertaken more often. This is why this plan is so important."



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# Child pain management

**R**esearch Paramedic Greg Whitley has secured funding from Health Education England, East Midlands and National Institute for Health Research and National Institute for Health Research and Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care for a PhD titled 'What are the predictors, barriers and facilitators to effective management of acute pain in injured children by ambulance services?'

The aim of his PhD is to identify why pain is poorly managed in injured children within UK ambulance services and to explore ways to improve this.

Greg received a formal offer letter for the PhD Studentship on Thursday 15th June 2017. One comment stated 'The panel were very impressed with the enthusiasm and energy shown in relation to your proposed PhD study and your desire to undertake postgraduate doctoral study with the aim of developing a clinical academic

career, and as such, would very much like to offer you the studentship.'

The studentship is very prestigious and highly competitive with only four funded places across the East Midlands. Greg was thrilled to accept the offer.

This PhD is not only an amazing opportunity for Greg but will also improve the research profile of EMAS and the University of Lincoln.

Greg said: "I feel privileged and honoured to be selected for the PhD studentship, I am very



• **Research Paramedic Greg Whitley**

eager and excited to start and I'd like to encourage anyone else who wants to do a PhD to look into funding"

Greg will start his PhD at Lincoln University in 2018. He will continue to work part-time as a paramedic during the PhD. This will help maintain his clinical skills and stay patient focussed.

# Isles of Scilly training

**T**he Isles of Scilly, just off Cornwall, is one of the most famous beauty spots in the world - uncrowded and unspoilt with thousands of visitors every year. The tourist board says 'from the minute you arrive, you'll fall in love' and that's just what the new island paramedic teams have done.

It was a stroke of luck that two sets of fully trained paramedic couples applied for the jobs on these unique islands, joining South Western

Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, moving in February from Manchester and Warwickshire.

Stuart Barrs and Elizabeth Tucker moved from Manchester and Henry and Anna McCann brought their children from Warwickshire.

The paramedics have spent the first few months having their sea survival and island familiarisation training and have firmly established themselves as part of the Isles' local community of just over

# EMS management course

**E**dge Hill University is launching the UK's first Professional Doctorate in Emergency Services Management.

Created in response to the introduction of the Police and Crime Bill and the shift to integrated service delivery, the part-time course is now accepting applications from senior managers across the sector.

Focussing on the professionalism of the emergency services and teaching leadership, management and business skills, the new programme brings together academics, policy makers and fellow practitioners.

The course offers professionals the chance to improve their ability to question, analyse and critique, recognising the value

of management research in everyday work practice.

A research thesis will allow professionals to study a particular issue or challenge they face at work in the hope of finding a collaborative, integrated service solution.

Course leader Paresh Wankhade, Professor of Leadership and Management and Editor-In-Chief of International Journal of Emergency Services at Edge Hill, said: "This new and innovative programme of research will help candidates to develop professional management practice while gaining an appreciation and understanding of the relationship between academic research and the professional practice of management."

"I'm delighted that we have the support of senior management across the police, fire and ambulance services so we've been able to develop this course to provide professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed and progress in their careers."

The programme will be officially launched on Thursday 13th July with key note speakers including Roy Wilshire, Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council, Dr Anthony Marsh, Chair of the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives and Steve McGurk, Trustee of the Fire Service Research & Training Trust.

**• For more information about the programme, contact Professor Paresh Wankhade on [Paresh.Wankhade@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:Paresh.Wankhade@edgehill.ac.uk)**



two thousand.

Trained up on the islands' ambulance resources - The Star of Life (SOL) ambulance boat (a fully kitted ambulance boat, the only one of its kind in the Country) and the five ambulance mules (all-terrain vehicles, pictured) the paramedics are now ready for the summer visitors.

The couples join another clinician and volunteer

Community Responders who all play a big part in treating sick or injured patients. Patients are treated at the scene or taken by the Star of Life ambulance boat back to St Mary's Hospital or if a serious incident patients may be flown directly to the mainland.

Chris Taylor, Operations Officer for Penzance & Isles of Scilly said: "The new residential paramedics have fully immersed themselves into the Isles of Scilly community. They have been welcomed warmly by the locals, community off Island responders, St Mary's hospital staff and GPs, and the local Emergency Care Assistants who have lived and worked on the Islands for many years. Together they provide a high level of care and commitment to all who visit and live on these beautiful Islands.

We have many picturesque areas to work in the South West and are always looking for qualified paramedics to join our highly skilled teams. See our website if you are interested in joining SWASFT."

# Like father, like son



• **Paramedic Osian Roberts and his son, Emergency Medical Technician Aron Roberts.**



• **Head of Operations Rob Jeffery and his son Alex Jeffery, of the Urgent Care Service.**

Last month the Welsh Ambulance Service celebrated Father's Day by shining a spotlight on all the amazing Dads in the organisation - and the children who followed in their footsteps.

Among them is Llandudno paramedic Osian Roberts, whose 25-year career on the frontline inspired son Aron to join the service as an Emergency Technician in Llandudno at the age of 21.

Aron said: "From an early age I have been interested in my father's work and attended many Emergency Service Events where I decided that this would be the career for me.

"At the age of 16 I became a volunteer with the British Red Cross and at the age of 18 I was a driver for the G.P out of hours service. Whilst working here I became a Community First Responder and enjoyed it so much I helped to set up the Aberconwy and Colwyn teams.

"I was 21 when I passed as an Emergency Technician originally based at Dobs Hill, but I was lucky enough to transfer closer to home in Llandudno.

"I know that my mother is also extremely proud of me working with my Dad but she did have a nightmare sorting out our uniforms.

"It's great doing the same job as my Dad, knowing that he understands and is there for support at

# 999 tweets

Friday 30 June marked the 80th anniversary of the 999 emergency number and in a bid to mark the day, North West Ambulance Service's (NWAS) Communications Team attempted to tweet 999 of the 4,000 emergency calls the Trust receives each day.

Working on a rota system between the hours of 8.00am

and 6.00pm, members of the team tweeted basic, non-identifiable de-tails of 999 calls, to show the range of calls the Trust answers and the outcome of that call.

Head of Communications, Julie Treharne explains: "It is a common misconception that every 999 call we receive results in an ambulance being sent, when in fact last year alone, over 135,000 calls were dealt with over the phone with one of our specialist paramedics. They may decide to refer the patient to a local GP or offer self-care advice instead.

"Our tweets will show what the caller says the problem is and whether an ambulance was sent or not. We know 999 tweets is a tall order but we thought it would be a fitting tribute to the number which has helped so many people since its introduction."

The 999 number was first introduced in London in 1937 and was the world's first emergency number. Just 1,336



difficult times. He has a wealth of knowledge and experience to draw from and is able to share these experiences with me which helps me to become a better clinician."

Osian, who is also a Clinical Team Leader, said: "My father was a policeman so a career in the emergency services seemed a natural choice for me. I moved to Cardiff aged 16 to begin my career with the Ambulance Service returning back to North Wales in 1991. In 1991 I completed my Technician Course in Liverpool then progressed rapidly in 1993 to become Wales's youngest Paramedic aged 21.

"From an early age it was obvious that Aron's intentions were to follow in my footsteps having taken a more than average interest in the work that I did. Whenever there was an opportunity to do so, Aron was there helping out, attending Emergency Service Day's and even proudly donning his very own uniform at age 7.

"I am extremely proud of him as he has worked very hard to achieve his goals."

Rob Jeffery is the Trust's Head of Operations in the Hywel Dda and Powys health board areas.

Last year he was awarded the Queen's Ambulance Service Medal for dedicating his 30-year career to the ambulance service in Wales.

His wife Paula Jeffery is an Advanced Nurse Paramedic based in Tenby and his 22-year-old son Alex works for the Trust's Urgent Care Service, based in Pembrokeshire.

Pembroke-born Rob said: "I signed up for the

army at 14 serving in the Welsh Guards for 10 years and working for Bechtel Petrochemical for 3 years before joining the Pembrokeshire Ambulance service in 1985.

"I have been proud of Alex since the day he was born, he can be very laid back but colleagues, whose opinion I value, tell me he's good with the patients and that's what we are all in the service to do. He has grown up with the ambulance service as a regular topic of discussion."

Alex, a former pupil at Pembroke Comprehensive said: "I left school at 16 to study Sports Development and Coaching in Pembrokeshire College, joining the Ambulance Service in 2015 on Patient Care Services.

"My Dad always said it was a privilege to go into people's homes or lives when they are most in need and this stuck with me from an early age.

"I did my Emergency Medical Technician training in Swansea and parts of the course were challenging however it does equip you to begin your career. My Dad was always there with encouragement when I needed it. I now have a county relief position in Pembrokeshire and all the staff here have been very supportive.

"Our paths cross quite often in work but you'd never know we were related although staff who worked on the road tell me we are very much alike, although I am three inches taller!"

"I tell my Dad he works too many hours but he still very much enjoys what he does so I guess that's got to be a good sign."

calls were made in the first week compared to staggering approximate 700,000 now. The police receive the largest percent-age of 999 calls, followed by ambulance services, fire services and then the coastguard. The number was expanded to the UK's larger cities following World War II but complete UK coverage wasn't achieved until 1976.

North West Ambulance Service has three centres which answer 999 calls in the region - based in Liverpool, Broughton and Manchester. These operate on a 24/7 basis, have just under 500 staff on the rota and last year, answered 1.24 million calls. The three centres are virtual so a 999 call can be answered by any one of them, regardless as to where the call is made from, for example a caller in Liverpool can be answered by a member of staff in Manchester.

Over the years, the Trust's call centres have expanded to include services such as an air ambulance dispatch

desk to the urgent care desk which further triages non life-threatening calls to ensure the patient gets the right help. Traditionally the busiest time has always been after midnight on New Year's Eve but call volumes have matched that on other bank holidays and if there is extremely hot weather.

Director of Operations, Ged Blezard, who is responsible for the 999 call centres comments: "Our call centre staff work very hard and play a vital role in the care of our patients. There are many people alive today because of their actions. Emergency Medical Dispatchers, those who answer the calls, can be talking to someone about an injured knee on one call and on the next instruct a wife on how to give her husband chest compressions after a cardiac arrest. We completely regard those staff as being as much a part of the frontline of our Service as those who arrive in ambulances."

# London's Air Ambulance enhances its duty crew



**T**he London's Air Ambulance charity and Barts Health NHS Trust have appointed 11 consultants to the London's Air Ambulance service. This large investment to move to a consultant delivered service will ensure London's Air Ambulance is ready to deliver the future of advanced trauma care to London.

The service is continually innovating ways to prevent unnecessary deaths from trauma, and procedures carried out before patients reach hospital are becoming more complex and challenging. From the autumn, a consultant will be present on most critical missions, alongside the duty crew including doctor and paramedic, ensuring patients

have the best possible care.

Commenting on the service enhancement, London's Air Ambulance Medical Director, Dr Gareth Davies, said:

*"To prevent death from severe injury requires increasingly complex treatments at the scene. Patients don't just need more hands to treat the patient but seniority of staff is important as well, which is why we will add a consultant as*

*standard to our duty crew.*

*"We are developing many initiatives to improve patient care and we need this enhanced team in place to deliver these. We have now appointed the consultants, whom I would like to congratulate on behalf of the service, and will be working with them and the wider team to get ready for the go live date in the autumn."*

The new group of Consultants, as with all doctors with the charity, will be employed by Barts Health NHS Trust, and the Paramedics by the London Ambulance Service.



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# A&E alcohol concern

**N**ine of out of ten Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments are failing to identify young people with alcohol problems, preventing them from getting the vital help they need, a new study in the Emergency Medical Journal has found.

A survey of 147 A&E departments, conducted by researchers from the University of Surrey, found that young people are not routinely asked about their alcohol consumption, a useful tool in detecting alcohol problems. The research also found that those over the age of 65 are not routinely asked about their drinking either.

The survey found that over 85 per cent of A&E departments do not routinely ask young people about their alcohol consumption or use formal screening tools to identify those that may need help or advice about their drinking. This is in contravention of NICE guidelines, which suggest that screening followed by feedback of the results is the most effective way to reduce alcohol related harm.

Although young people are drinking less than previous generations, this age group still accounts for the largest number of alcohol-related A&E

admissions.

Researchers also found that people over the age of 65 are not asked about their alcohol consumption. Drinking above recommended limits can have a disproportionate effect on older people due to interactions with medications, and increased sensitivity to the consequences of consumption. Statistics show that 20 per cent of older people drink at unsafe levels.

A&E departments were, however, found to be improving alcohol screening for adults, with more than 60 per cent routinely asking and using formal screening tools to ascertain alcohol consumption. More than 80 per cent of departments had increased their access to alcohol health workers/clinical nurse specialists since 2011, offering expert advice and support to patients with alcohol problems. A&E departments had also made progress in informing general practitioners of when individuals were admitted to hospitals, helping to create a

care plan for the individual.

Harm from alcohol currently costs the UK around £21bn per year, with £3.5bn spent in the NHS, £11bn tackling alcohol-related crime and £7.3bn from lost work days and productivity costs.[1] This figure is expected to rise with increased sales of alcohol.

Lead author of the report Dr Robert Patton from the University of Surrey said: "Ending up in A&E is often a wakeup call for people and forces them to assess their alcohol consumption. However this is not always the case and sometimes involvement from a health care professional is what is required to support people in reducing their alcohol consumption."

"The fact that young people and those over 65 are not routinely asked about their alcohol intake results in their problem being swept under the carpet which is dangerous. Alcohol can destroy lives and puts undue pressure on the NHS, so it is important that the support is in place to help those affected."

[1] Latest figures from Alcohol Concern

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# PTS apprentices

**N**ine apprentices are learning how to provide a vital service to patients having started careers with the North East Ambulance Service.

Carl Wilkinson, Iain Stewart, Joe Osborne, Alice Murray, Andrew Lillico, Amy Galley, Ryan Allinson, Sarah Holey and Caitlyn Skelsey have all started Patient Transport Service apprenticeships delivered through Northern Skills Group.

The cohort will all spend one year as ambulance care assistants - delivering inter-hospital transfers, hospital discharges and palliative care transport.

It's all part of an investment in the next generation of ambulance service staff and the apprenticeships could be the beginning of great things for this group.

Andrew Lamb, education coordinator with the North East Ambulance Service, explained: "This role is seen as a great entry point for a career in the NHS, and many former ambulance care assistants have gone on to secure permanent

positions as Ambulance Care Assistants, Emergency Care Assistants or train to become paramedics.

"The apprentices start with a four-week induction period, in which they learn first aid, ambulance service policy and importantly driving skills.

"Once that's complete they'll spend a year in the role, supported by mentors and experience Patient Transport Service staff, gaining important on-the-job experience."

The trainees will spend the initial part of the programme at the NHS' Lanchester Road Hospital training facility, in County Durham.

This includes tutoring which will give them a chance to earn a CI qualification on their driving licence - allowing them to drive medium-sized vehicles.

Since 2012, the North East Ambulance Service has trained 79 apprentices - 52 of whom are

still working for the trust today in a range of roles including emergency care and student paramedics.

Now as a contributor to the Apprenticeship Levy, the Ambulance Service continues to invest in future skills.

Peter Wilson, Northern Skills Group director, said: "It's great to see another creative use of apprenticeship training in the North East as part of a carefully considered, long term workforce development strategy.

"As Apprenticeship Levy payers the North East Ambulance Service has embraced the opportunities available as a consequence of this new model apprenticeship funding and is planning its investment in skills and training accordingly.

"The Northern Skills Group team is thrilled to be supporting this cohort as they progress into jobs that are critical to the fabric of our health service."

# Animated gecko joins ambulance crew!

**N**orth West Ambulance Service (NWAS) has teamed up with Toddler Fun Learning to produce a fact filled, fun video about ambulances and the wonder of technology means the animated presenter could join the crew!

‘Gecko’ – the chirpy reptile is a regular presenter of children’s films and in this video, he meets ambulance crew, Paul Dunbar and Terry Allen, from Liverpool. After showing viewers around the vehicle, he then shifts to North West Ambulance Service’s new state of the art logistics centre in Haydock.

In the huge new garage there, Gecko watches mechanics fix ambulance lights and sirens and explains why the ambulances need a special garage, while his friend Blue Mechanical gets a bit of a soaking from one of the staff!

The video is one of a series by Toddler Fun Learning, based in Merseyside. Toddler Fun Learning is an educational App and YouTube channel for children aged 1 – 6, with Gecko’s Real

Vehicles one of the many shows that they make. Each episode features a different vehicle and teaches children facts about them whilst also meeting the crew who operate the vehicle.

The team approached NWAS about featuring an ambulance and filming took place with a paramedic crew earlier this year.

Creative Director, Christian Hughes comments: “It was an absolute privilege filming with the crew of the North West Ambulance service for our latest Gecko’s Real Vehicles episode. The whole aim of this series is to educate children about different vehicles, but more importantly make them aware of different, important jobs in the world around them. Introducing children to ambulances in a fun and

informative way will hopefully cut back the mystery around ambulances and ease any fears if they were to have to travel in one.”

Head of Communications, Julie Treharne comments: “Engaging with young children is very important for the Trust and this is the ideal way for them to see what we do and what’s inside those huge yellow vehicles they see whizzing by! Who knows? Maybe by watching the video, some youngsters may be inspired to become Paramedics when they grow up!”

You can watch the video above or via the Toddler Fun Learning app.

• **The Toddler Fun Learning App can be downloaded here** <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/toddler-fun-learning-educational-videos-for-kids/id1115147391?mt=8>



# Funds raised by charity wing walk so service volunteer raises over £2,000



**O**n Sunday 9th July, community first responder (CFR) volunteer Mary Marshall strapped herself to the wing of a plane and hurtled through the sky at speeds of up to 130mph. And she did it in honour of her late husband, Keith Marshall who sadly passed away in November last year.

Mary was also joined by three of Keith's former colleagues and friends; Chris Hartley, Lindsey Stafford-Scott and Jon Needle.

Speaking about the experience, Mary said: "It was amazing, fabulous. I enjoyed it so much. The freedom, the views; It was just exhilarating."

And thanks to the incredible support and generosity of Zeal Solutions, who sponsored the full cost of the event, every penny of the £2,000 raised by the group will go directly to the charities

closest to Mary's heart.

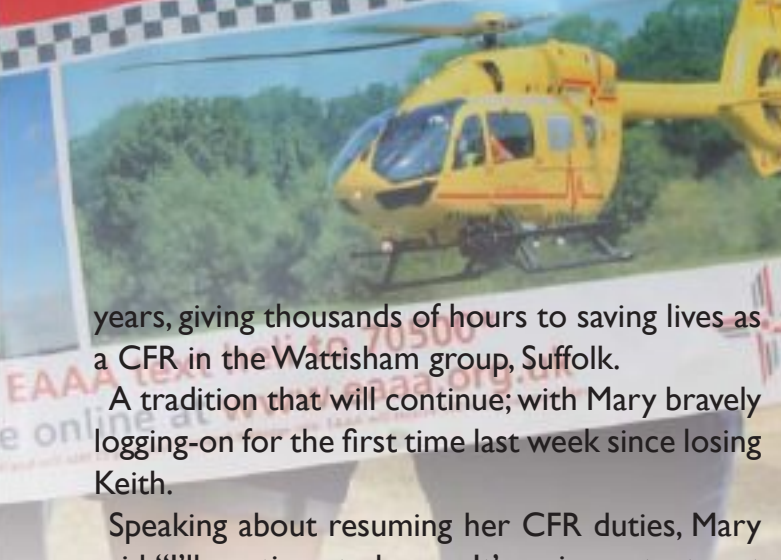
Mary said: "Keith was passionate about his community first responder group, and the air ambulance came out to us the day we lost him [Keith], so they're two very special charities for me."

She added: "The ambulance service was his [Keith's] life; it meant so much to him."

Keith was a volunteer with the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) for five



# bar to dizzying heights as ambulance in honour of late husband



years, giving thousands of hours to saving lives as a CFR in the Wattisham group, Suffolk.

A tradition that will continue; with Mary bravely logging-on for the first time last week since losing Keith.

Speaking about resuming her CFR duties, Mary said: "I'll continue to log on. It's an important part of the service. We can save lives, we do save lives. And that matters."

CFRs are trained by EEAST to respond to medical emergencies such as cardiac arrests, allergic reactions, diabetes emergencies and patients with breathing difficulties and chest pain.



# Paramedics aim high

Scaling Mount Snowdon once is enough for most people but two paramedics from Birmingham are preparing to walk up (and down) Snowdon seven times in seven days for charity.

Just when Ambulance Life hit the press, Paramedics Amanda Hill and Kay Alexander, based at the Trust's Hollymoor hub in Rubery, will be walking up Mount Snowdon in Wales via the Llanberis route for seven consecutive days from Friday 7th July with their final ascent planned on Thursday 13th July.

The duo, who decided on the charity walk whilst at the top of Snowdon last year, are hoping to raise £1,500 each for two charities close to their hearts. A close friend of Amanda's has Neuroendocrine Tumours (NET), a currently incurable cancer, and is raising money for Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham who are funding NET research. Kay's little boy Alex

was born with a critical heart condition and is raising money for Birmingham Children's Hospital where Alex received life-saving treatment.

Amanda, 47 from Kidderminster, said: "About three years ago my neighbour and friend was diagnosed with NET. After the initial shock and all the treatments, scans and tests, fundraising began in the family. I want to help the cause and decided to climb Snowdon seven times in seven days to help raise money for NET research in the hope that, one day, a cure will be found for this type of cancer. I am doing this for Dave, his family and other patients who suffer from this cancer. Kay and I have been training together ahead of our seven days and, with support from our



• Pictured Kay (left) and Amanda (right) at the top of Snowdon last year.

friends and family, we each hope to raise our target of £1,500 and summit Snowdon seven times in one piece!"

Kay, 40 from Birmingham, said: "I got told that my new born baby would need surgery on his heart when he was just one day old. We got transferred to the Birmingham Children's Hospital and, six days later Alex had open heart surgery which took many nail biting hours and afterwards, spent many days on

the paediatric intensive care unit. You would never know to look at him that he went through such amazing surgery. If it wasn't for the brilliant teams at the hospital he wouldn't be here now. I owe them his life, so for that I'm doing these fundraising walks and supporting my friend Amanda. We're looking forward to the challenge ahead and know that we'll motivate each other to get to the finish line. Thanks to everyone for their donations so far."

• As well as seeking donations, the duo are being joined by several colleagues for one summit to help raise even more money.

To donate to either charity, please visit Amanda and Kay's Just Giving page via:  
[www.justgiving.com/sevensummitsonsnowdon](http://www.justgiving.com/sevensummitsonsnowdon)  
[www.justgiving.com/summittodoforfriends](http://www.justgiving.com/summittodoforfriends)

Alternatively, you can donate to NET by texting JLUA57 to 70070 or BCH by texting KAYA47 to 70070 with the amount £ you wish to donate."



# Fund raising for LOROS

A paramedic from Leicestershire who will trek the Inca trail in Peru later this year in aid of a hospice has raised £190 through a social evening with her colleagues.

Vicky Hilditch hopes to complete the Inca Trek in August for LOROS, a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland charity, which provides care and support to terminally patients, their families and carers.

As part of her fundraising, Vicky organised a social evening for East Midlands Ambulance Service colleagues at The Brewery Café in Sileby, Loughborough, which included live music and a buffet.

Vicky said: "The evening was a real success and I would like to thank everyone for coming."



# Charity station

A popular ambulance station open day returns this month to give visitors a unique insight into the work of the emergency services in Norfolk.

Ambulance, fire, police, critical care charities and a host of other organisations will be at the free event on Sunday 2nd July.

The open day provides an opportunity for people to find out more about the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST), meet ambulance staff and volunteers, and explore inside an ambulance and rapid response vehicle.

Proceeds will go to Nelson's Journey, a charity that supports bereaved children in Norfolk.

Daisy the vintage ambulance will be on show as well as Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, Norfolk Police, RNLI, Norfolk Accident Rescue Service, and East Anglian Air Ambulance will also have a stand.

Organiser Dale Meacham-Roberts, who is a duty locality officer for EEAST, said: "The open day is a great opportunity to welcome the community to the station and get all our partners together



• Daisy the vintage ambulance

to celebrate the work of our emergency services and charities.

"People will get a behind the scenes look at the ambulance service as well as raising money for a very worthy cause."



# A new era

• *The new Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance AW169 helicopter*

**D**orset and Somerset Air Ambulance new AgustaWestland 169 (AW169) helicopter entered into service last month.

The aircraft was selected following an extensive evaluation process. Its outstanding characteristics, superior capabilities and safety standards will ensure unprecedented levels of mission effectiveness and provide an enhanced life-saving service for the people of Dorset and Somerset.

Bill Sivewright, Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Chief Executive Officer said: "It has

always been the Charity's aim and clear vision to pursue clinical excellence; pairing Critical Care Teams with the outstanding capabilities of the AW169 is a natural development of that vision. Patient benefit remains our top priority and this was the single biggest criteria in selecting the new aircraft.

"Our ambitions and clinical aspirations determined a particular requirement from whichever aircraft we selected. The capabilities and flexibility offered by the AW169 made it a clear winner and in our view it was the only aircraft which fully

met our criteria. Another major plus in selecting a new mark of aircraft is that you are taking advantage of the latest advances in technology. That means that it is safer and easier to maintain and operate."

The medical equipment in the AW169 will not be hugely different to that which was carried on the Charity's previous aircraft, however, the biggest difference is the space inside the cabin. This allows the Critical Care Team to have complete access to a patient, head to toe; a significant benefit if a patient needs further intervention or



treatment on-route to hospital.

Over the past few months, the life-saving service has increased its operating hours from 12 to 19 hours a day (07.00am - 02.00am). During this time and in the hours of darkness, the crews have been deployed using a Critical Care Car.

Bill continues:

"The AW169's night flying capabilities mean that we can now move forward into providing full night HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) missions. Our team will have the ability to fly directly to the patient without



• *Inside the front seat*

the need of any fixed or pre-established lighting which is a significant advantage. We are now looking forward to completing night HEMS training and subsequently operating the new aircraft for 19 hours a day."



# RAF Traumacare

**P**aramedic Paul Dunn from Lincolnshire is a full-time paramedic in Horncastle and a Medic Reserve with the Royal Air Force. To celebrate Reserves Day he shares his story.

In the operations room of a military medical facility a radio crackles into life. Close by, the paramedics immediately take notice, among them Staff Sergeant Paul Dunn of 335 Medical Evacuation Regiment, Royal Army Medical Corps.

"Nine-liner, Nine-liner!" calls out the medical operations officer receiving the call.

The phrase refers to the nine lines of information relayed from the field to medical staff to make them aware of what they will be dealing with, including location, severity of injury and so on. A 'nine-liner' can often mean serious casualties. Within seconds, Sergeant Dunn's Initial

Response Team (IRT), has set off in specialist military ambulances to provide initial treatment at the scene. As a paramedic with the East Midlands Ambulance Service in civilian life, scrambling quickly is what Paul is used to doing. The difference is what he finds upon arrival.

The IRT is confronted by multiple casualties: a gunshot wound to the abdomen, first-degree burns to a soldier's hands, a young civilian girl with shrapnel protruding from her arm. The most devastating injuries are two soldiers who have had their right arms blown off, one at the elbow and the other at the shoulder. Both are

bleeding severely. Everyone is screaming with pain.

The medical team immediately get to work. They assess the injuries, apply tourniquets and dressings, administer morphine, write times with markers on bare skin and load the casualties onto stretchers and into the back of the ambulances. After only a few minutes the scene has been cleared. The wounded are soon transferred to a Resus facility, essentially a military A&E. There they are stabilised and readied for transfer to a more advanced facility with surgical capability.

All of this has taken place not on some dusty desert battlefield, but in rural Shropshire. The blast and gunfire are simulated, the wounded civilians and soldiers





played by cadets or servicemen. The amputees are real, but are covered in impressive makeup. It has been one of many scenarios undertaken by Paul during a two week-long training exercise. The battle wounds may have been fictional, but with an emphasis placed on authenticity, the training value for him is very real.

"In the military you do a lot of training for different mechanisms of trauma injury that you only touch on in civilian practice," said Paul. "It can be blast injuries, high and low-velocity gunshot wounds, catastrophic haemorrhaging, traumatic limb amputations, and all in an immersive, realistic setting."

Paul served in the army

infantry for twenty-five years, then attended university to train as a paramedic. He recognised that he could combine both experiences and make a contribution to military medicine, while improving his own skills to apply at East Midlands Ambulance Service.

"It's great to be part of an IRT, with a mix of doctors, anaesthetists, medics and paramedics," said Paul. "That combination means I can learn from other practitioners and draw on their experiences to help improve my own knowledge and practice, which I then take back with me to my civilian job in the Ambulance Service."

With the training benefits so clear, Paul's employer has been

very supportive in allowing him the time to attend courses and exercises. He believes other paramedics debating whether to join the military reserve services have a lot to gain, both personally and professionally.

"I'd definitely recommend it to any of my paramedic colleagues," said Paul. "You extend your skills, knowledge and experience by working with likeminded clinicians from across the country, improve your teamwork and communications, travel abroad and it doesn't cost your employer a thing." More information about careers in the Reserve Army Medical Services can be found by searching online for 'Army Reserve'.

# Volunteer celebrations

**L**ast month more than 60 volunteers were thanked for their support at a celebratory event held by North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust.

The event was organised as part of Volunteers Week, which ran from June 1-7.

The Trust, which covers 3,200 square miles across the North East region, serves a population of 2.7 million people by handling all NHS 111 and 999 calls for the region, operating patient transport and ambulance response services, with support from over 330 volunteers.

Whether as a volunteer porter, ambulance car service driver, community first responder or governor, NEAS volunteers invest thousands of hours in the service every year with some choosing to volunteer to help them in their career path and others want to give something back at the end of their career.

In total, 62 volunteers were recognised for long service of between five and 20 years and 12 were highlighted for going the extra mile for their patients.

Two volunteers received certificates to recognise their 20 year dedication to

supporting the Trust along with 13 volunteers recognised for 15 year service, 18 volunteers for 10 year service and 28 volunteers for five year service.

Over 190 people volunteer as ambulance car service drivers (ACS) for NEAS. At least 23 of them have volunteered for over 10 years and two have volunteered for over 20. Together they have completed a combined 993 years of volunteer service. Last year the drivers volunteered over 195,000 hours, completing over 148,000 patient journeys all over the region - that's an average of nearly 8.5 hours per day each - and reached over 4,000,000 miles.

All ambulance care service drivers will soon be issued with a new smart phone to replace the current tablet devices and have received new ACS car signs as well as uniform trousers. NEAS has provided ACS drivers with the opportunity to develop their skills by offering BLS CPR

and First Aid.

**Training and IT skills courses.**

The service also values the support of approximately 100 community first responders (CFRs).

NEAS has boosted the recruitment of CFRs over the last 12 months, welcoming a number of new people to the team, with training to develop their skills.

Fourteen existing CFRs are now trained to deliver Heart Start and CPad awareness sessions in their communities with access to training mannequins to support them when attending a public event or providing CPad awareness training.

Upgraded uniforms and new equipment such as new pagers, belt clips and docking stations are giving our CFRs better access to ambulance control as well as greater protection against the elements when responding, making them clearly identifiable in public places.



## THE RCAT RANGE

from



see page 7 or [click here for more details](#)



# CFRs on the rise



**F**ollowing a successful National Volunteers' Week 2017 (1st-7th June), the East of England NHS Trust (EEAST) saw an incredible 360% spike in community first responder (CFR) registrations of interest.

In the weeks prior to National Volunteers' Week, the Trust received on average nine registrations of interest compared with 42 following this year's celebrations.

Currently the Trust has close to 999 CFRs that make up almost 300 groups across the region.

EEAST is proud to support 140 car drivers who take patients to and from routine appointments, providing a vital service to local

community members who are unable to transport themselves.

Their Trust User Group (TUG) is an independent group of volunteers from around the region who help EEAST to identify ways of improving services and support them with a range of activities.

Chaplains also play an integral part within the Trust offering pastoral, emotional and spiritual support to all levels of staff and volunteers regardless of their

faith, belief or none.

During the Volunteer's Week celebrations, EEAST ran a CFR takeover week (w/c 5th June), which included a celebration event for their Brightlingsea CFR group who on 10th June celebrated 20 years of dedicated service to their community.

Julie Lockhart, TUG member said: "It has been a pleasure to work with the Trust, although it can occasionally be challenging. I enjoy the work I do and find a lot of satisfaction in being involved".



# Cardiac arrest survivor, 26, reunited with lifesavers



**A** first aider has been praised for his actions which helped save the life of a colleague in Suffolk.

Aaron Kent was working at Birds Eye in Lowestoft on 10th April when he collapsed and stopped breathing.

Factory first aider Chris Calver rushed to his side and began cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and used one of the

company's defibrillators on the 26-year-old who was in cardiac arrest.

Within minutes, clinicians from the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST), co-responders from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and the East Anglian Air Ambulance arrived.

After 10 shocks from a defibrillator Aaron was resuscitated at the scene and

airlifted to the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

He was reunited with his lifesavers on Wednesday (19th July) after making a full recovery.

Aaron cannot remember anything of the day he collapsed and has since had an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) fitted in his chest.

"I had a few weeks of sore ribs but I feel alright. I'm a lot better now and coming back to work was a bit odd because I was off for 10 weeks.

"I did not realise there were so many people that came out to me. I want to thank everyone who helped out," he said.

Chris Calver was presented with a certificate from EEAST's very own Chris Calver, who was the first paramedic on scene.

Rogan Day, a duty locality officer for EEAST, said the team were "absolutely delighted" to be reunited with Aaron. He added that the first aider's actions were crucial.

"All of us feared the worst on the day. This was a real team effort. All of us are in agreement that without Chris, he [Aaron] would not be here today. It is really important that people understand the importance of early CPR and using a defibrillator."

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# My 'guardian angels'

**A** triathlete has thanked the 'guardian angels' who saved his life after he suffered a cardiac arrest.

Kerry Jones was asleep at his home in Aberdulais, Neath Port Talbot, when he suddenly began experiencing chest pains in the early hours of the morning.

The 54-year-old was concerned that he was having a heart attack so decided to call the Welsh Ambulance Service.

Paramedic Adrian Thomas arrived at his address in a rapid response car within six and a half minutes of the call.

He provided treatment, including pain relief, and carried out an electrocardiogram (ECG) to check his heart rhythm.

Describing how he felt, Kerry said: "A couple of days before it happened I thought I had a chest infection, because I went out for a jog and it literally brought me to a stop.

"I booked an appointment with my doctor, but the day before that I woke up with an aggravated feeling in my chest and within seconds of that the pain started to travel across my chest and towards my armpit.

"I picked up the phone and told the operator what was happening, then came downstairs and waited for the paramedic to come in.

"When he arrived he put the ECG on me and said that everything was okay and I was going to be alright."

At first Kerry's observations were normal, however shortly after paramedics Lisa South and Chris Collins arrived as back up in an emergency ambulance, he suddenly collapsed and went into cardiac arrest.

Between them the team quickly administered an electric shock with a defibrillator and carried out resuscitation, after which he regained consciousness.

They then alerted staff in the cardiac centre at Morriston Hospital in Swansea, before stabilising his condition and taking him there on blue lights.

Kerry was admitted to hospital in the early hours of March 17th and underwent an operation to have a stent fitted to improve the blood flow around his heart.

He spent three days in hospital and is now on the road to recovery having returned to

his job in childcare. He has also vowed to continue taking part in triathlons in the local area.

He said he was amazed at how quickly he received treatment and praised both the ambulance and hospital staff who saved his life.

"They got me into hospital and the team there was waiting for me, so the stent went in and half an hour later I was up having a cup of tea, they were absolutely amazing," he said.

"It was all done within the golden hour, and from the operator to the paramedics to the hospital staff, it all went smoothly. They're my guardian angels.

"I'm on the mend now and while I know it can be a slow process, my goal is to get back to doing triathlons, which I've been taking part in for the last five years."

Paramedic Adrian, who is a Clinical Team Leader based at Neath Ambulance Station, said he was pleased to hear about Kerry's recovery.

"It was very sudden that Kerry went from being okay to going into cardiac arrest," he said.

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# Reunited

• From left to right: Laura Staplehurst, Rebekah Vonk, Colin Monckton, Drew Monckton, Julie Marchant, Johnathan Harrold.

**A** Sussex man who suffered life-threatening injuries and spent six months in hospital after a serious car accident, has been reunited with the ambulance team who helped save his life.

Drew Monckton, aged 36, from Horsham, was travelling in his car on the A24 between Horsham and Dorking, when his vehicle left the road shortly after 6am on 9 September 2016.

Luckily for mechanic and father Drew, a member of SECamb control room staff, dispatcher Kate Nebbett, spotted his car in trees down an embankment on her way to work. Kate stopped to help, alerted her clinical colleagues and stayed to assist the medical team. Kate's actions for going above and beyond the call of duty were recognised at the Trust's annual staff awards earlier this year.

The first clinicians to arrive at the scene were Paramedic Rebekah Vonk and Associate

Practitioner Heidi Gaskins after details had been gathered and support provided by Emergency Medical Advisor Laura Staplehurst.

Rebekah and Heidi were backed by paramedics Julie Marchant and Johnathan Harrold before air ambulance team Mike Rose and Mark Salmon attended the scene by road.

The crews worked together to provide emergency care to Drew before he was taken to St George's Hospital in London.

The prognosis for Drew was uncertain and he was kept in an induced coma for a month. Things weren't any more certain when he failed to gain consciousness when attempts were made to wake him from

the induced coma. However, over time, and with expert hospital treatment, he made improvements and following a six-month hospital stay with intense rehab, he was able to return home.

Drew, who has had to teach himself to walk again due to a brain injury which affects his short term memory, was full of praise for everyone who helped him.

He said: "I'm just so grateful to everyone for everything they did. You don't realise when you out and about quite how much the NHS does. It's been a real eye opener. I'm really pleased to have been able to meet everyone face-to-face to say thank you."

Drew's dad, Colin, a retired police officer, who now works for SECamb as an equipment officer at Banstead said: "As a former police officer I know how nice it is to have people let you know how thankful they are. I wanted to say a massive thank you from all of us. Everyone, from Kate who initially stopped and helped to the guys in the control room, from the crews who attended the scene to all the hospital teams - they all did a brilliant job."

Paramedic Rebekah Vonk added: "On behalf of the whole team it's been a real pleasure to meet Drew and Colin. It's essential in incidents such as this that everyone works together as a team and that's exactly what we did. We all wish Drew and his family all the very best for the future and for his continued recovery."



# 'Little Legs' says a big thankyou



• L-R: Fiona Jones, Joanne Hulme, Steven Curry and Kerry Barnett

**S**teven Curry, 40 from Dinnington Village has said thank you to ambulance staff after suffering a cardiac arrest

Despite running up to 40 miles a week and being active all his life, 56 year old Steven Curry, known fondly as 'little legs' by his running pals, took everyone by surprise at a local running meet recently when he collapsed with a cardiac arrest.

Luckily, fellow runners from competing clubs, whose day jobs are as a nurse and a paramedic, were on hand to help in the critical minutes that made the difference between life and death for Steven.

Off duty paramedic from Chester-le-Street Fiona Jones and Nurse practitioner Kerry Barnett, were first on scene along with Abigail Dance of AED Medical who was providing medical event cover on behalf of Birtley Athletics. Fiona, who had competed in the very same race, began CPR immediately and was in easy reach of more than one defibrillator to help bring the five foot two Elswick Harrier from Dinnington village back.

Father of one, Steven is convinced that someone was watching over him that day (Monday 22nd May) at Monkton Stadium. He said, "I cycled 50 miles on the bike the day before and though I was a little tired, I felt OK. I remember finishing the race, but then coming to and wondering why everyone was making a fuss of me. I was definitely in the right place at the right time; if I'd stayed home that night it might have happened in front of my son and I might not have made it."

Fellow runner from Elvet Striders, Fiona knows only too well how important CPR and access to a defibrillator is in such an incident, having been a paramedic with the North East Ambulance Service for 16 years.

On scene, Fiona was quickly joined by NEAS Hazardous Area Response Team paramedic, Joanne Hulme, as well as emergency care team Bob Armstrong and Robin Percy, who quickly whisked Steven off to the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle for a stent fitting.

Joanne Hulme who has been with the Trust for 19 years and with the HART team since

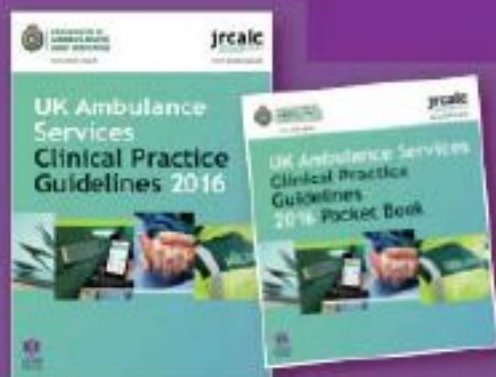
February, had just started working night shift when she was called to attend to Steven. When she arrived, Joanne gave Steven an ECG and administered pain relief. Backed up by David and Robin, they transported Steven to hospital. She says, "I travelled in the back of the ambulance with Steven to hospital. He was in pain but comfortable throughout the journey. I find doing patient reunions an emotional experience but it's great to get back and see Steven doing so well."

Overwhelmed by the care he received from everyone, Steven wasn't home for long before he was in touch with the ambulance service, keen to say thank you in person for everything. He concludes: "I need to say to tell them all what a difference they've made, for bringing me back to my family and for helping reassure me that everything was OK. The ambulance guys were lovely, cracking jokes with me and helping to take my mind of what was a worrying time for me, and they even came back to see how I was doing in the hospital."

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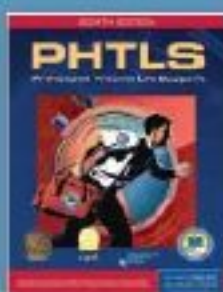


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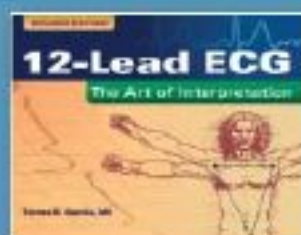
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