

## Our services:

Emergency and urgent care  
Non-emergency patient transport  
NHS 111



**North West  
Ambulance Service**  
NHS Trust



# AMBULANCE NEWS – 4 MAY 2020 COVID-19

COVID-19 Brief 03

As the response from the whole NHS to the coronavirus pandemic continues, below is an update on our trust's current position.

In the previous briefing on 6 April, we detailed what our top priorities were. These continue to be our priorities, therefore we would like to give an update on each one:

- **Increasing 999 and NHS 111 call handling, clinical and dispatch capacity at pace**

We have increased the call handling staff in our emergency operations centres in Greater Manchester, Liverpool and Preston, by utilising and training agency workers, existing apprentices and other redeployed trust staff, which has resulted in an additional 187 staff now in position to manage 999 calls.

In NHS 111, we have also increased the number of staff available to help patients. This includes the training of 80 paramedic students, who have joined us at our Liverpool and Greater Manchester contact centres, the majority of which are performing a service advisor role specific to the COVID-19 care pathway.

We have 46 new health advisors, 12 trained service advisors, and three additional permanent clinicians, who are supported by nine paramedics. We are continuing to recruit, and a further 142 staff will have joined 111 by August 2020.

As expected, we have been experiencing a significant increase in NHS 111 calls with an average of 6,000 calls a day being handled.

Our clinical capacity to manage urgent and emergency care has also increased significantly due to our current student paramedics and apprentice emergency medical technicians becoming fully operational. In addition, 150 patient transport service (PTS) staff have volunteered to up-skill to join their emergency service colleagues. All these additional staff will work alongside qualified clinicians to ensure we continue to provide an effective and responsive service.

Our overall performance against our 999 and NHS 111 response targets remains steady.

We continue to focus our efforts on supporting the wider healthcare system by reducing the number of people taken to hospital and increasing the number of patients receiving the right care over the telephone (hear and treat) or on scene (see and treat).

We have seen an increase of 10% in hear and treat incidents and a 17% increase in see and treat incidents, which has resulted in a 24% reduction in the number of patients conveyed to hospital compared to the same period last year.

**Headquarters:** Ladybridge Hall, 399 Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL1 5DD

**Chairman:** Peter White

**Chief Executive:** Daren Mochrie QAM, MBA, Dip IMC RCSEd, MCPPara



Delivering the right care, at the right time, in the right place; every time

- **Increasing our paramedic emergency ambulance fleet at pace**

In addition to the 60 new emergency ambulances mentioned in the previous bulletin, and due to the reduction in the operational activity of the non-emergency patient transport service, we have now converted 80 PTS ambulances to enable them to operate safely within the emergency service fleet.

- **Ensuring the flow of personal protective equipment (PPE)**

Our procurement team has been working extremely hard to source and distribute all levels of PPE to ensure our staff are kept safe and protected, and we continue to follow Public Health England guidance on this subject.

We have had many volunteers help with the packaging and distribution of this vital equipment which has been greatly welcomed and appreciated.

We have also linked in with the Northern Ambulance Alliance, which consists of our trust, North East, Yorkshire and East Midlands ambulance services, whereby we are exchanging any surplus PPE to ensure we all have sufficient supplies of all the different levels of PPE required.

- **Staff and volunteer welfare including staff COVID-19 testing**

Over the past month we have seen staff testing introduced and the number of tests undertaken is increasing on a daily basis. We have utilised existing drive-thru testing sites across the region, and have also set up our own testing site at one of our Manchester based ambulance stations. So far more than 1,000 staff and their household members have been offered testing.

Staff welfare continues to be a priority and we have offered support to all staff who are working on the front line and behind the scenes, as well as those who are in isolation. We have created a dedicated wellbeing section on our staff intranet, with tips on staying healthy both physically and mentally.

- **Increasing our critical care transport and co-ordination capacity which includes supporting the new Nightingale Hospital in Manchester**

A regional COVID-19 critical care transfer service provided by ourselves along with North West Air Ambulance has now been established.

This new dedicated service is separate to the pre-existing time critical transfer service that continues to operate as usual. It will provide additional capacity to support 'intensive care unit to intensive care unit' transfers across the North West.

The transfer of COVID-19 patients from acute trusts is vital for mutual aid and surge management. The service will provide all transport, equipment and offer additional support personnel.

We have also been instrumental in the establishment of NHS Nightingale Hospital North West, located at Manchester Central Convention Complex. The hospital houses 750 beds for COVID-19 patients from across the region who require oxygen therapy or general medical care but do not need critical care.

Many organisations, including ourselves, have been working tirelessly over the last few weeks to ensure the smooth opening of the hospital. Our trust is facilitating admissions and discharges, and procedures specific to the Nightingale North West have been developed with colleagues from the hospital and NWS departments. We are very proud to have been part of this remarkable achievement in such a short space of time.

Finally, we would like to pass on our thanks once again for your continued support at this challenging time for us all. We have seen huge generosity from many local business and large companies who have donated food, drink, vitamins and messages of support, which have been heart-warming and very much appreciated.

If you would like any further information please contact us via [communications@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@nwas.nhs.uk)