

Summary Annual Quality Statement

2013/14

This summary document is from the Welsh Ambulance Service. It includes highlights on how the service is striving to improve the quality and safety of the services it provides to patients, carers and the public.

**“Improving
care for
patients”**

Improving Care for Patients

Words from the Chair – Mick Giannasi



Welcome to the Annual Quality Statement. It sets out in plain language what we did during 2013/14 to improve the quality of service and care which we provided for the people of Wales and what we intend to do during 2014/15 to improve further.

Words from the Chief Executive Officer – Elwyn Price Morris

The purpose of this document is to report to you on the quality of the services and the care that we provided during a twelve month period. We are accountable to our patients and this report is just one example of how we answer to that accountability. Therefore this statement is written for our patients and the public.



2013-14 was one of our most challenging years with demand for our service remaining high. During the year the Minister for Health and Social Services announced a number of improvements that were to be made to the Welsh Ambulance Service.

Developing the Annual Quality Statement

There have been important ‘drivers’ for making sure we improve and monitor the services we deliver and by listening to patients on their experiences of using our services we are able to get a good picture. An aging population living with one or more chronic condition/illness means that they may rely on our services more. The rural landscape of Wales presents challenges in accessing healthcare, issues around social exclusion and for people trying to navigate an often complex healthcare system can mean that we experience increases in demand.

We face big changes over the next year. We have a Strategic Transformation Board that is overseeing the clinical transformation of the Trust; it is looking at how we use our resources and how we develop our staff to make sure they have the right skills to deliver services that is fit for all our patients. Health Boards are working with us to ensure that our ambulances reach those patients in emergencies and get them the right care and treatment they need quickly. There will be much closer working with all our NHS colleagues in Wales to share the responsibility for ensuring patients have the best quality service and care they deserve.

Improving Care for Patients

Introduction

In our first Annual Quality Statement we told you a lot about our structure and what we do. If you haven't read the first statement you can find it [here](#). If you wish to see the full Annual Quality Statement for 2013/14 click [here](#).

The Annual Quality Statement is intended to provide assurances to you that as an Emergency and Clinical Responsive Service we are committed to delivering high quality services. From peoples' feedback we have been able to improve our services. There is room for further improvement and we continue to work with patients, staff and others to identify where improvement is needed.

Meeting Standards The Trust has a number of condition specific clinical indicators (CIs) that we are committed to report on. The CIs are evidenced based and are developed in line with Welsh Government priorities. We adhere to National Guidelines, such as the **UK Ambulance Clinical Practice Guidelines (2013)** and those published by bodies such as the **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)** and other professional advisory groups like the **Royal College of Physicians** and the **Royal College of Nursing**.

Clinical Audit is a quality improvement process that seeks to improve patient care and outcomes through a regular review of care against clear criteria and the implementation of change. The clinical audit and effectiveness topics reflect National, Health Board and Trust priorities.

What did we do well?

There was **514,909** emergency calls received to the 999 Emergency Service; **199,515** calls were dealt with as immediately life threatening Red (1 & 2) calls. These calls needed an emergency blue light ambulance.

One of the key actions for the year was to give the public a bigger voice in the design and delivery of the ambulance service. We listened to over 4,000 service users who shared their personal experiences of what it was like to be a user of our ambulance services.



The Welsh Ambulance Service

- **Emergency Ambulance Service (EMS) – 999 contact**
- **Patient Care Service (PCS) – pre planned scheduled transport**
- **NHS Direct Wales (NHSDW) 0845 46 47 service for advice and information**
- **Volunteer - over 2000 volunteers acting as volunteer car drivers and community first responders**



- **514,909 emergency 999 calls**
- **317,415 NHS Direct Wales calls**
- **3,515,196 visits NHS Direct Wales website**

Improving Care for Patients

Supporting Self Care. Supporting patients to self care has meant that our staff are able to respond to those patients who need more urgent clinical care. All our staff have been able to support and encourage self care behaviour through their contact with patients.

Preventing Infections. There have been some key achievements this year. We implemented an In-House Flu Vaccination Programme to protect our staff and patients against flu. As a result of the drive to vaccinate staff the Trust was recognised for its Flu Vaccination Programme and won an award for 'Most Improved Flu Fighter Campaign' Public Health 2013/14.

Learning from Patients. The management of complaints is led by the Chief Executive. They are considered at Chief Executive Level in recognition of their importance; it is acknowledged how the effective and timely management and handling of concerns is in fostering good relationships between the Trust and the public. Concerns, accolades and patient experiences are valued by the Trust and tell us clearly the quality of services we are providing.

Safeguarding Patients. Our Safeguarding Team have worked in collaboration with external agencies including third sector organisations to improve the way we look after vulnerable groups within the community.

Clinical Care. There has been a lot of activity carried out on the clinical modernisation of the ambulance service over the year. Significant improvements have been made during the year with updating, replacing and standardising clinical equipment.

Service Improvements. Demand for our services has continued to increase and combined with hand over delays at hospitals across Wales has resulted in our average performance for responses and life threatening calls within 8 minutes often falling below the national target of 65%. We are working with Health Boards, NHS Trust and Welsh Government colleagues to improve this as part of the transformation of the ambulance service.

Alternative Care Pathways are supporting Paramedics in assessing patients and identifying those that are suitable to appropriate alternative care pathways. This is avoiding the need to take patients to hospital wherever possible.

We support stroke fast-track pathways to 14 District General Hospitals (DGH) across Wales. Patients identified by our clinicians are pre-alerted to the most appropriate DGH to ensure their condition is treated as an emergency and that they receive the most appropriate care.

Improving Care for Patients

Priorities for 2014-2015

We know that there are unacceptable limitations in services that can lead to delays in getting treatment and care. We will be working closely with our NHS colleagues to make sure this improves. Moving forward, we want to deliver more timely responses, raise our profile further to make it easier for people to complain and share more learning from our complaint handling in tackling issues where we have failed individuals.

We strongly believe in treating patients with kindness, respect and involving them, their families and carers in their healthcare and treatment. We will make sure that we continue to listen patients and staff and monitor the experiences of all those who use our services.

Further contacts and information

Personal Experiences/Stories. To share your experiences/stories of using any of the Welsh Ambulance service you can contact our 'Partners in Healthcare Team'



01792 311773



PPI.team@wales.nhs.uk

Compliment/Concern. If you wish to raise a compliment or a concern please contact the Putting Things Right Team



0300 321 3211



Amb_PuttingThingsRight@wales.nhs.uk

Trust Information Websites



The Welsh Ambulance Services website www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk Visit the [publications section](#) to read other Trust strategies, plans and Annual Review. To read last year's Annual Quality Statement click [here](#).



NHS Direct Wales website www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk Visit the site for health, information, advice and signposting

This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format upon request.