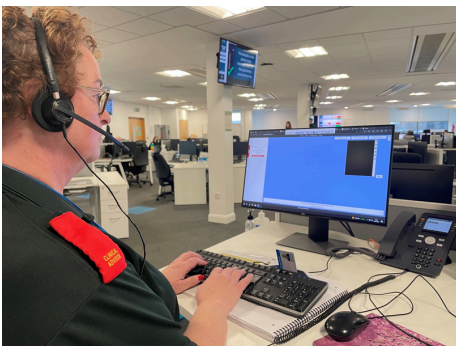


Our year in action 2023-24

NHS

North West
Ambulance Service
NHS Trust



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A message from our chief executive

It's been another busy year for us at North West Ambulance Service, and as we look ahead, it's important to reflect on our accomplishments.

This booklet highlights some of the incredible achievements from the year, celebrating our staff and volunteers and the fantastic work that they have done.

Our people really are the heart of the ambulance service and I am always amazed by their dedication, hard work and success, despite the many challenges they face.

Their innovation and forward thinking sets us apart, and I am extremely proud of what we have achieved together.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the people of the North West for their continued support over the last few years, which has really helped us through some very challenging times.

This past year we have had lots to celebrate, and have seen significant investment into additional staff and resources, which has improved our quality of patient care, patient safety and staff wellbeing.

I hope you enjoy looking back on our key moments from 2023/24.



DAREN MOCHRIE QAM
Chief Executive

Continuing to deliver our strategy

Our 2022-25 organisational strategy and our four supporting strategies (People, Sustainability, Service Delivery and Quality) explain where we want to be and how we will get there together.

Our organisational strategy was created using input from our people who told us that we need to improve everyday working lives, focus on getting the basics right and look after each other.

The strategy is a commitment to creating a working environment where physical and mental health and wellbeing are priorities. As well as a focus on staff, we look at how effectively we deliver our services, ensuring we meet the highest standards for our patients.

It defines our shared purpose: to help people when they need us most. Based on this purpose, our strategy sets out our vision: to deliver the right care, at the right time, in the right place; every time.

Social circumstances can result in people having hugely different experiences of healthcare, and we are committed to working together with our partners to better understand the role that we play in reducing these inequalities. To achieve our vision, we will focus on the following aims:

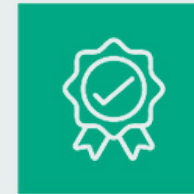
- Provide high-quality, inclusive care
- Be a brilliant place to work for all
- Work together to shape a better future

Whatever our role, we all share a common purpose:

To help people when they need us most.



WORKING TOGETHER



BEING AT OUR BEST



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our values are the behaviours that underpin all that we do. They describe how we should approach our work. They can be found in our systems and processes, from appraisal paperwork to planning tools for large-scale projects for change.

Putting our values into practice supports us to provide compassionate care and improve outcomes and experiences for our people, patients and communities

A year in numbers

1.7m 
emergency
calls

1.1m
incidents
attended

10%
were categorised
as life threatening



158K patients were treated or
signposted over the phone
(hear and treat)

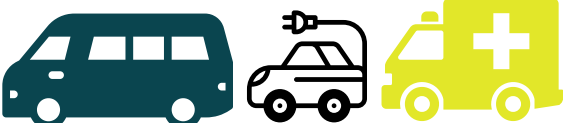
1.2m
Patient Transport
Service (PTS) journeys

1.7m
 calls

Patient satisfaction

Paramedic Emergency Service
(PES) 91.2%
PTS 91.6%
111 88.5%



1000+ vehicles


1000+ 
staff recruited

Provide high-quality, inclusive care

Consultant midwife selected for landmark research programme

Consultant Midwife Dr Stephanie Heys became one of the first senior research leaders selected for the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Senior Research Leader programme.

This landmark nursing and midwifery programme is aimed at helping the research potential of senior nurses and midwives across the country. During the three-year programme, Steph will help drive the NIHR's vision of an inclusive and multidisciplinary healthcare research landscape.

Led by Steph, we also launched a Maternity and Neonatal Care Policy to better support our staff when attending maternity and neonatal incidents.



Volunteering to improve patient care

Our Patient and Public Panel (PPP) was recognised for their fantastic work with volunteer members by being shortlisted for the Engaging and Championing the Public Award at the Patient Experience Network National Awards.

Throughout the year, the PPP helped facilitate a range of opportunities for volunteer members to take part in, helping them play a contributing role in improving our patient care.





Helping to identify undiagnosed high blood pressure

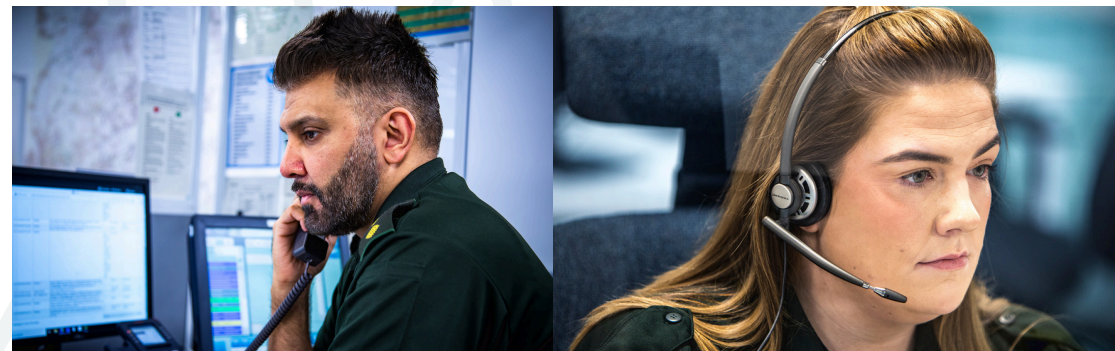
A new partnership initiative to identify undiagnosed high blood pressure was successfully piloted. We are now working to roll this out across the region.

Using secure email data transfer of electronic patient records, the initial pilot involved analysing data of our patients who had a high blood pressure reading during clinical observations on scene, and helped identify 14 new cases of hypertension, borderline cases or cases needing management review.

Work has now begun with local integrated care boards and cardiovascular disease prevention groups, including GPs and community pharmacies across the region to scale up this pilot.

BBC Ambulance returns for fourth NWS series

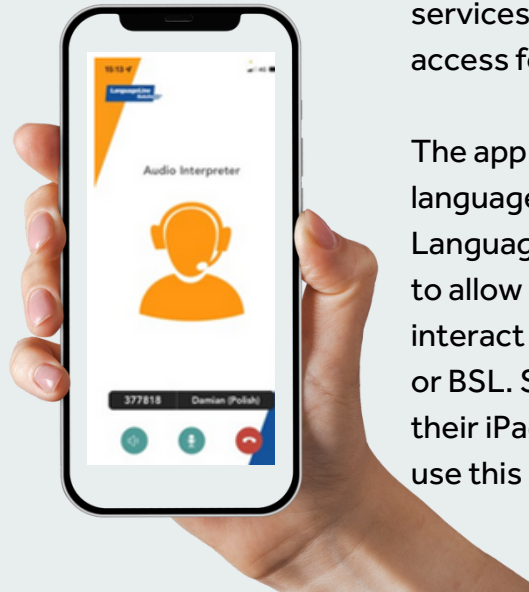
We once again took part in the BBC award-winning documentary series 'Ambulance'. The filming for series 11 and 12 featured staff from south Cumbria, Lancashire and Greater Manchester and hit the nation's screens in the summer of 2023 and spring 2024.



The programme regularly attracts viewing figures of 3.5 million and sparked trending discussion and debate on social media. It also provided us with an opportunity to showcase the varied careers within our organisation and drive visitors to the careers section on the trust website.

Improving communication with Insight

In October 2023, we launched the Insight app across our PES and PTS services for operational crews to access following a successful pilot.



The app supports both audio language line and British Sign Language (BSL) video interpretation to allow our operational crews to interact with patients via a translator or BSL. Staff can access the app on their iPads which allows them to easily use this service when necessary.



A symbol of exemplary service

Our Deputy Chief Executive, Salman Desai, was presented with one of the first King's Ambulance Medal (KAM) at an investiture ceremony at Windsor Castle. Salman was recognised for his exceptional service and contributions within the field of ambulance and pre-hospital care.

Established to honour the dedication and selflessness of those who go above and beyond in providing life-saving care and support during emergencies, the medal is a symbol of the highest standards of excellence in the ambulance service.



Exceptional success for Research and Development

It was another successful year for our Research and Development Team, which picked up the Special Award for Exceptional Experience at the Greater Manchester Health and Care Research Awards.

The award is presented to organisations that reflect the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network Greater Manchester's strategic vision and values to invest in improvements that help develop the practice of research delivery for participants, staff and key stakeholders.

111 and EPR award nominations

In March two of our new projects became finalists at the national HSJ Awards. Our 111 Call Improvement Project was shortlisted in Improving Urgent and Emergency Care through Digital and Digital Organisation of the Year categories, and our Electronic Patient Record (EPR) programme was shortlisted in the Improving Out-of-Hospital Care through Digital category.

The 111 Call Improvement Project introduced a system that allows patients phoning the NHS 111 service to input their details online while they are waiting to speak to a call handler. Patients then receive health advice via text message as a reminder of what they have been advised over the phone.

For the EPR programme, we developed a progressive web-application supporting the digitisation of frontline clinicians, enabling accessibility of clinical records for both NWS and other key stakeholders.



Increasing operational resources

We recruited and deployed new operational staff and to increase our operational ambulance fleet, we now have 32 additional ambulances at peak times and have recruited almost 200 new front-line paramedics and emergency medical technicians. There are now over 2,500 more emergency ambulance hours available every week compared with March 2023.



Enhancing mental health support

In collaboration with Integrated Care Boards, NHS England, and mental health trusts, our Mental Health Team secured eight new mental health response vehicles. These vehicles will be deployed in 2024, enhancing the care we provide to mental health patients and freeing up ambulances for life-threatening emergencies.





Expanding access to our patient transport services (PTS) booking system

PTS increased access to the online booking system and we now have more than 8,500 users across the North West. This allows healthcare staff to book transport online without waiting in call queues, streamlining the process. Looking ahead, we also plan to improve the process for patients by implementing a new booking system that will allow patients and their representatives to securely book their own transport through the PTS online portal, pending eligibility.

Protecting staff from transmittable diseases

We introduced a new fit-testing team dedicated to ensuring the proper fit of filtering facepiece 3 (FFP3) masks for patient-facing staff, guaranteeing maximum protection against transmittable diseases. This team is a vital part of NWS' commitment to staff safety and protection.



Supporting our operational teams

Ahead of our busy winter period, we launched a communications campaign to support our operational teams during the peak winter months. We used statistical data and analysis to remind the public that we prioritise the most life-threatening situations to ensure we keep saving lives. The campaign focused on five key themes: Every Second Counts (using 999 wisely), falls prevention, reducing repeat prescription calls to 111, mental health awareness and managing expectations of the patient transport service.

We worked closely with partner organisations, created media opportunities, and engaged directly with people in the community – which helped make this campaign one of our most comprehensive and far-reaching winter ones yet.

Be a brilliant
place to work
for all



Striking EDI gold

We were awarded the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion's (ENEI) Gold Standard for Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) for a second successive year.

We were one of only 15 gold standard winners out of 171 global entries, from across 26 different sectors. Overall, we scored 95% which placed us as the second highest ranked organisation out of all entries globally.



Championing inclusion at the LGBT+ Network Conference

We are always proud to be involved in events that relay the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and this was showcased when we hosted the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network Conference at Manchester Metropolitan University.

In addition to a number of colleagues getting involved in workshops and breakout sessions, Lisa Ward, Director of People and Executive Champion for the LGBT+ Network, and Deputy CEO Salman Desai were also in attendance. They spoke about the need to call out bad practices and non-inclusive behaviours.

Trailblazing for change

We were awarded the Race Equality Matters (REM) Bronze Trailblazer Status in February for our work in addressing racial inequality in the trust.

Since launching our Race Equality Network in 2021 we have taken strides to tackle race inequality and the REM Trailblazer judges commended a number of changes we have implemented to raise awareness of racial inequality.

This includes our new Reverse Mentoring Programme, additional leadership training sessions to raise awareness of what it means to be an inclusive leader, internal and external events that encourage communication and voicing concerns, as well as amending our style guide to help ensure the correct pronunciation of people's names.



Innovating patient care

In November we received a national Helpforce Champions Award after one of our volunteering initiatives was recognised for saving hundreds of hours of ambulance time by getting patients in less serious conditions the right care more quickly.

Since the launch of the Low Acuity project's pilot in 2022, there has been a noticeable reduction in trained NWS community first responders (CFRs) responding to less urgent emergency calls with support from a dedicated clinician based in the control centre. The clinician reviews incoming 999 calls that have been categorised as being 'low acuity' to identify incidents that may be appropriate for a volunteer to attend.

The initiative supports patients to get the right care more quickly, helping keep ambulances free for immediate life-threatening emergencies.



CAREERS WITH HEART.

We successfully launched our 'Careers with heart' recruitment campaign in November 2023. The campaign helped raise awareness of the different career opportunities at NWS that are all connected by one thing – heart.

We wanted to attract people who wanted to help others, make a difference and have pride in their career.

We used social media, local radio and local media outlets to share our campaign messages.



Celebrating our volunteers

In June we hosted our first combined volunteer celebration event to thank and recognise the fantastic efforts of over 1,100 volunteers we have across the North West.

Joining us at the event were a number of people representing each of their volunteer groups including patient transport service volunteer car drivers, community first responders, Patient and Public Panel members and welfare van volunteers. Senior leaders and speakers were also in attendance to show their appreciation.



Enhancing workplace wellness

In October we appointed four new workforce wellbeing officers who now play a key role in supporting staff wellbeing and helping enable a positive employee experience.



Each officer works in their respective geographical areas to engage with local operational and corporate teams, and help facilitate health and wellbeing events, deliver wellbeing-focused training, along with providing a range of engagement activities.

Additionally, thanks to the NWSA Charity, staff have benefited from additional indoor and outdoor furniture, and other much-needed enhancements to our ambulance stations and other trust sites, providing better relaxation facilities while in work.



Supporting our staff

We appointed a new Chaplain for Staff Wellbeing Reverend Karen Jobson. Karen works across NWSA sites providing confidential listening and support in times of change, challenge, and distress. Through her role, she offers confidential pastoral support that is proactive and reactive to people of all faiths and none.



Wellbeing Festival

In November we held our first Wellbeing Festival. The event provided a range of bitesize educational and interactive health and wellbeing experiences, plus the opportunity to get a health check done on the day. The NWSA Wellbeing Team worked in collaboration with the NWSA Public Health Team to deliver the event which marked the first in a series of wellbeing festivals, with a number of pop-up events planned across the North West over 2024 into 2025.



Career development

We supported internal staff across our Urgent Care Service (UCS) and Patient Transport Service (PTS) to work towards becoming emergency medical technicians, via the Emergency Medical Technician Apprenticeship. For some, this paves the way to becoming a paramedic in the future.

To support staff, we provided online support sessions, 1-2-1 support, information, advice and guidance in preparation for the role and recruitment processes.

This is a rolling programme that aims to successfully develop our talented staff to reach their full potential.

Launch of the CPD and Learning Hub

We launched a new continuing professional development (CPD) and Learning Hub. The Hub enables staff to access information about all learning activities and opportunities relevant to their individual roles and to support their aspirations. There is a range of learning materials, courses, interactive content, and information to develop staff's knowledge and skills.



Expanding our Hazardous Area Response Team (HART)

HART saw many changes over the last 12 months including expanding its leadership team to better support staff. They also held taster days for our Women's and Race Equality networks to attract more diversity.

Following a robust and challenging recruitment process, HART also received over 100 applications for the HART paramedic role, marking a record-high number of applicants.

Plans for a brand-new state of the art facility for HART Team in Liverpool were signed off and the new site is due to be completed by June 2025. The development will see improved facilities including a gym and specialised training and education facilities.

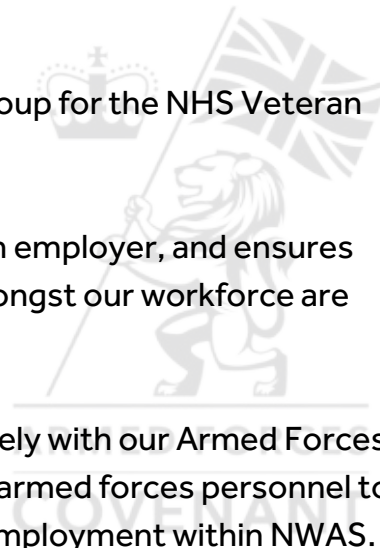


Recognising our armed forces community

In November, we were reaccredited as 'Veteran Aware' by the national steering group for the NHS Veteran Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA).

The recognition demonstrates that we support the armed forces community as an employer, and ensures that veterans, reservists, and other members of the armed forces community amongst our workforce are looked after.

As part of our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, and after working closely with our Armed Forces Network, in February 2024 we also introduced a guaranteed interview scheme for armed forces personnel to help veterans, currently serving reservists and cadet force adult volunteers gain employment within NWAS.



Supporting our staff with reasonable adjustments

Throughout the year we continued our commitment to enabling inclusive workplace environments where all our members of staff are supported to reach their full potential.

Following feedback from our staff survey, in December 2023 our Executive Leadership Committee approved a new procedure for requesting and managing reasonable adjustments, which provides guidance for managers and an overview of the process to request reasonable adjustments if a request form is submitted by staff.

Our Disability Network also helped raise awareness of the barriers that people with disabilities face by holding its first reasonable adjustments forum during Disability History Month. The new procedure was discussed at the event, with presentations and engagement from NWAS leaders also.

Enhancing accessibility

We are committed to making sure our service is as inclusive as possible.

In October, we joined the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme. The Sunflower aims to raise awareness and assist individuals with hidden disabilities that are not immediately apparent to others.

By wearing it, in the form of a pin badge, wristband or lanyard, individuals signal to others that they may require additional support, understanding, or patience in various situations, and helps ensure those with hidden disabilities receive the assistance and respect they deserve.



Marking milestones

NWAS colleagues from across the region were honoured for their career milestones of 20 through to 40 years, along with the Queen's Medal for service and good conduct. The three regional events were hosted by the respective head of operations and Chief Executive Daren Mochrie, with Chair Peter White and Deputy CEO Salman Desai presenting awards. Lord Lieutenants for each respective area presented the medals.



After dedicating over 25 years as a Patient Transport Service (PTS) volunteer car driver, covering more than 625,000 miles and assisting over 25,000 patients, Colin Tandy's selfless work was commended at the Make a Difference Awards run by BBC Radio Lancashire.

Star in a car Colin commended at local awards

Saluting our sisters

Our staff networks continued to grow and raise awareness of key initiatives and events throughout the year. In honour of 2023's Black History Month theme 'Saluting our Sisters', we held our first network collaboration event. The Race Equality Network (REN) and Women's Network came together to raise awareness of maternal health inequalities faced by people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds.

Key speakers included members of our Board as well as external specialists who shared learning and best practice from their own respective trusts to help us make improvements within our own service.

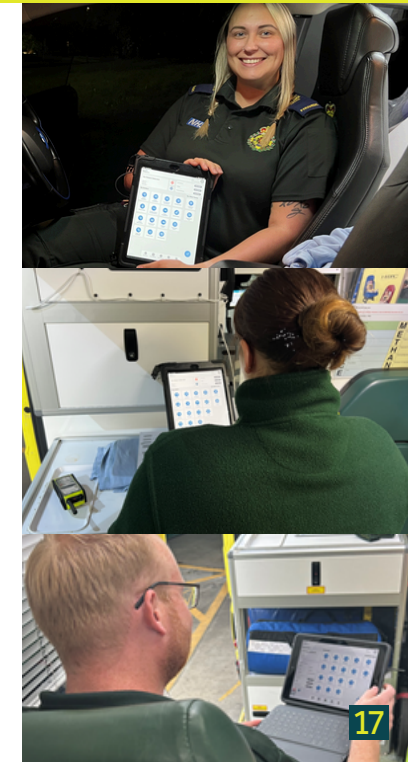


Working together to shape a better future



Listening to the community

Our Patient Engagement Team successfully delivered five engagement events across the region in 2023/24. The events were open to the public, patients, and neighbouring organisations and helped enable communication with our three main service lines through interactive activities, discussions, as well as question and answer sessions. 202 people attended, learnt more about the service and gave their feedback on how we can improve.



Electronic Patient Record (EPR) upgrade and switch to iPads

A new and improved version of the OneResponse software was developed with external company Dedalus and is now hosted on a system that acts and feels like an app to the user but is hosted on a website. Crucially, this enables system upgrades to take place without the need for system downtime or partner IT resource being required to reinstall the app.

The new OneResponse, launched in August 2023 via trust iPads, has improved patient care due to staff being able to access a more complete and legible patient record and access to real time clinical information. It has also improved medicines management tracking, gives meaningful clinical data and has improved the security of patient data.

Additionally, the EPR Onward Referrals pilot was rolled out in Cumbria and Lancashire in December 2023. The pilot enabled paramedics to refer patients to two Acute Visiting Service (AVS) providers via EPR electronic transfer. This enabled crews to leave the scene, when appropriate, without the need to have a conversation with a GP. Plans to roll this out wider in the trust are in progress.



Updating vehicle technology

After a successful pilot, the trust wide migration of Mobile Data and Vehicle Solutions (MDVS) officially commenced, replacing our previous Thorcom MDT, Garmin sat nav and reverse camera screens.



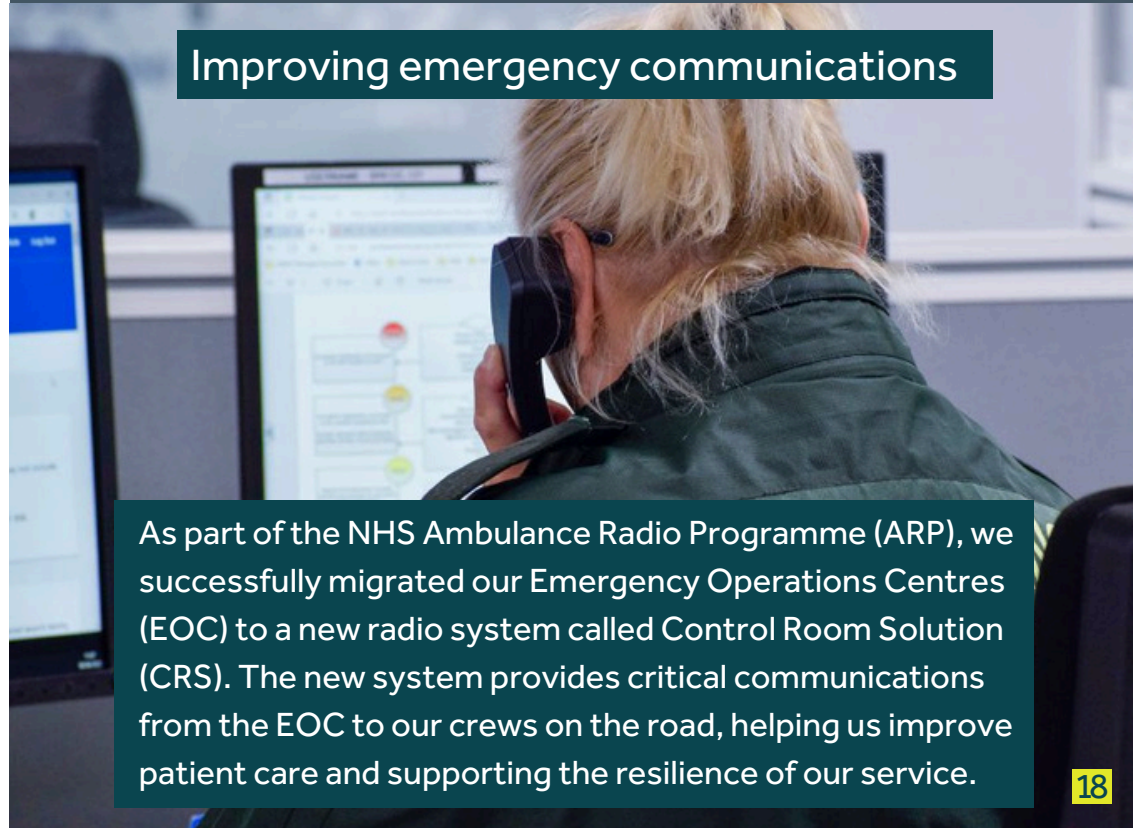
The move to MDVS was part of a national programme that saw all ambulance services in the country migrate to this system, and has helped improve communications between ambulances and control rooms across the region, consequently helping us improve patient care.

Protecting our frontline

Following a successful pilot in 2021, we officially rolled out body worn video cameras (BWVCs) across the entire trust. The project gives all operational staff the option to help protect themselves from incidents of violence and aggression whilst on duty by wearing a camera.

With the safety and welfare of our staff being at the forefront behind the roll-out, the aim is to help staff feel safer whilst on shift, by de-escalating any aggressive situations that may arise when treating patients. The use of the recorded footage also helps with reflection and learning, as well as being used as evidence in prosecutions should the need unfortunately arise.

Improving emergency communications



As part of the NHS Ambulance Radio Programme (ARP), we successfully migrated our Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) to a new radio system called Control Room Solution (CRS). The new system provides critical communications from the EOC to our crews on the road, helping us improve patient care and supporting the resilience of our service.

Staff survey success

It was a record-breaking year for our NHS Staff Survey as we received our highest-ever number of responses. The survey was completed by over 3,400 staff across the trust – which is nearly half of our total workforce – and beats last year's response total by 1200.

The feedback from the survey will be used to make improvements for both our staff and patients.

Project Management Office (PMO) goes from strength to strength

PMO played a crucial role in overseeing 60 projects, many of which enhanced the wellbeing and safety of our staff and patients. They managed a capital budget of £27 million and a revenue budget of £17 million. Additionally, they implemented a Benefits Management Framework, based on industry best practise, and have invested significant time to embed new practises. These are now delivering tangible outcomes for the trust which are reported through trust governance.



Creating a safe environment for staff

As part of our commitment to signing the NHS England Sexual Safety Charter and the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) Consensus Statement on reducing misogyny and improving sexual safety, we launched our new sexual safety campaign. Our approach – Stop, Speak, Support - reminds us to pause and look at our own behaviour, speak out to challenge the behaviours of others, and support anyone we know has been affected.

We want to create a safe working environment free from sexual harm. Staff welfare is one of our main priorities and this campaign allows us to make everyone aware of their responsibility to help make NWS a safe place to work.

As part of our Freedom To Speak Up offer, we have also embedded other speaking up processes to enable our staff to voice concerns about their wellbeing, the care they provide, or cultural issues.



Lancashire Skills Pledge Celebration & Awards Event



Widening Access Team's recognition

We were awarded the Recruit Lancashire People Award following our Widening Access Team's continuous work supporting and inspiring individuals and job seekers into employment. Throughout the year, the team was active in the community and promoted employment opportunities via jobs fairs, careers fairs, live chat sessions and online support sessions.

Branching out towards a greener future

Our Sustainability Team's plans to improve our green spaces grew from strength to strength as we planted 30 more trees, following the 50 trees that were planted the previous two years. The new trees, that have been planted across our sites, will not only benefit the environment and help contribute to better air quality, but also create better working areas for our staff, further supporting their wellbeing. They will also help continue our commitment to the NHS England and NHS Improvement Green Plan to deliver a new, zero-carbon NHS by 2040.

Progress on patient safety

We successfully rolled out the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF). The new framework brings significant benefits such as greater engagement with those affected by an event, including patients, families and staff, application of a range of system-based approaches to learning, as well as learning responses and supportive oversight.

Additionally, we adopted the Learning from Patient Safety Events (LFPSE) system, a national NHS platform for recording and analysing patient safety events in healthcare.

The PSIRF Team was also a finalist in the Digital Clinical Safety Award for increasing patient safety through digital risk management at the HSJ Digital Awards in June 2023.

Taking our strategy on the road

We held a strategy roadshow to get an understanding of operational colleagues' awareness, understanding and overall feeling of the trust strategy a year after its launch.

We visited up to 25 sites and engaged with 173 people through face-to-face discussions, followed by an online survey.

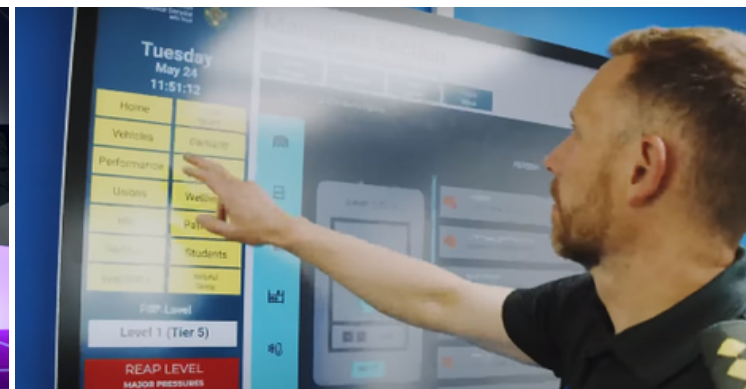
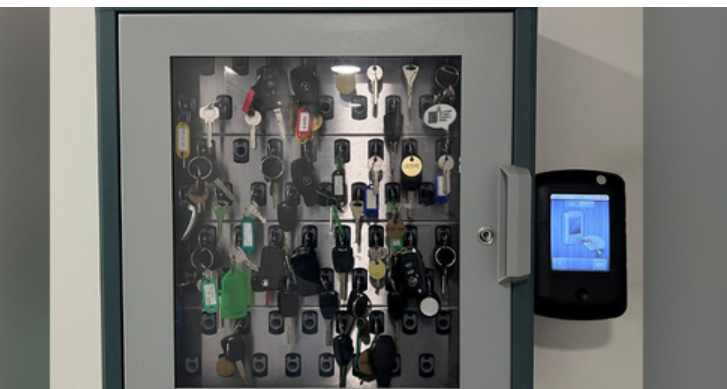


Digital Innovation Team receives national recognition

Our Digital Innovation Team was awarded the 'Enhancing Workforce Engagement, Productivity, and Wellbeing Through Digital Award' at the inaugural HSJ Digital Awards in June 2023, recognising their efforts in building a smart, connected ambulance service.

This recognition follows the implementation of various smart solutions across our sites, including smart wallboards, digital key cabinets, digital controlled drug cabinets, and personal issue controlled drug keys. This year, after a successful trial, the team began installing digital key cabinets in ambulance stations, with paramedics receiving their own controlled drugs (CD) keys in preparation for the CD cabinets.

These innovations will continue to be rolled out throughout 2024, helping our staff use digital technology to improve safety, wellbeing, and efficiency.



Our new digital solution

We replaced our paper-based system with a bespoke digital solution named 'Aspirer.' This allows our Paramedic Emergency Service (PES) teams to record their shifts electronically, ensuring precise and timely payroll processing each month. Since the rollout, we have also begun evaluating the system and identifying areas for improvement.



Advancing innovation with new and existing partnerships

We have built a new relationship with Lister Alliance, which will enable us to pilot the smart ambulance concept. We continue our partnerships with the University of Manchester, Lancaster University, the Northern Ambulance Alliance and Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) digital transformation group. We have been selected to be part of the Clinical Entrepreneurship Programme. This will provide funding to develop our innovations and the opportunity to learn from other NHS organisations.

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