

Module Code: LCHS4003

Module: Introduction to Health and Social Care

Assignment Title: Portfolio – Two Tasks

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Task 1: Official Letter**Service Chosen Community Mental Health Services**

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17 March 2026

Councillor Sharon Thompson

Birmingham City Council

Council House

Victoria Square

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Subject: Urgent Need for Improved Community Mental Health Services in Birmingham

Dear Councillor Thompson,

I am addressing my fellow residents of Birmingham to express grave concerns on the lack of mental health community services in our local community. Over the past few years, mental health has turned into a major problem of the public health as well as most of the members of our community cannot obtain the necessary and timely support. This is impacting adversely on the lives of the residents and putting a greater burden on local health and social care services.

Mental health community based support is evidently lacking and at the moment numerous people are waiting in long queues before their assessment and treatment. This latency typically contributes to the exacerbation of mental health, and thus is hard to intervene with. Consequently, there is an increased tendency of people to need emergency or crisis treatment, which would not be the case given proper community services. It does not only

impact that directly suffering mental health problems but also causes extra burden to families, carers, and healthcare providers.

The local authorities are under the statutory obligation to enhance individual wellbeing and make sure people receive proper care and support services under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. The Act emphasises the need to prevent and intervene early to curb the increase in needs. In this respect, the existing deficiency of community mental health services seems to be insufficient to bear such functions as a significant portion of the population is not getting the support they need at the appropriate moment. These obligations are to be fulfilled by ensuring that the services are readily accessible and effective.

The consequences of inadequate mental health care are especially clear as the vulnerable group, consisting of the youth, older adults, and those living with chronic mental health problems. To lack proper support, most people become socially isolated, suffer poor life quality, and struggle to be employed or educated. Careers and families are also involved, as they are likely to be left unguided to take care of those requiring it, with a lack of resources, which in turn can be emotionally and financially demanding.

Considering these issues, I would like to humbly encourage the local authority to focus on enhancing the mental health services in the community. This can involve the provision of more funds, more service facilities, and that the assistance should be readily available in the society. By enhancing such services, the individual well-being would be enhanced, and also pressure on the broader health and social care system would be decreased in the long run. I hope you will pay much attention to this crucial matter and believe that the relevant measures will be taken to overcome the existing gaps in the service delivery.

Yours sincerely,

Elias Schwaar

Task 2: Essay

Introduction

Ambulance services are a vital part of the UK healthcare system, providing emergency care and rapid response to patients in critical situations. This essay will briefly explore the development of ambulance services and critically examine two key challenges faced in recent years, including delayed response times and staff shortages.

Analysis

Since the introduction of the National Health Service (NHS) in 1948 and the introduction of ambulance services to the national system; the ambulance service in the United Kingdom has evolved in many ways as it tries to offer emergency services and patient transportation. Firstly, the ambulance services had minimal functions of carrying patients to hospitals but with time it has developed to offer advanced pre-hospital services (Baker et al., 2026). The ambulance services today have become the first stage of medical contact in case of emergency providing life-saving interventions and stabilising patients prior to their admission to the hospital. This has been facilitated by professionalisation of paramedics, enhanced training and application of modern medical practices like digital monitoring, and telemedicine. Consequently, ambulance services became an essential component of the broader healthcare system, as a main factor in enhancing the survival and patient outcomes (Alnashwan et al., 2025; Newton, 2021).

Nevertheless, these changes have not helped the ambulance services in the UK and in the last decade, it has been subject to a lot of challenge especially in regard to the delay in response time. The increasing requirements in emergency services are one of the principal reasons of this problem since it has been escalating faster because of ageing population, increased health requirements and increasing dependency on emergency care. Simultaneously, the workload in Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments has caused ambulance crews to have difficulties with timely transfer of patients, and consequently, unnecessary delays in returning to duty (Guasconi et al., 2022). It is proven that within the past few years, the situation regarding ambulance response has significantly deteriorated, and the average response time on emergency cases has grown significantly above the target levels (Khan, 2022). It is also backed by the recent UK statistics that the ambulance services continuously do not meet the national response time targets, which is a systemic problem of the healthcare system (Baker et al., 2026).

The effects of these delays are grave and far-reaching. The longer the response time, the higher the patient risk and this is more so in a life threatening situation like cardiac arrest or stroke where the patient needs prompt attention. It has been argued that delays in the arrival

of ambulance may be the primary factors that decrease the survival rates, which proves that a timely response is crucial (Khan, 2022). Moreover, the overcrowding of hospitals and patient discharge delays is another type of system pressure that leads to ambulances waiting in front of hospitals, further deteriorating the situation with response times (Mahase, 2022). These problems not only influence patient safety but also lower the levels of trust in the emergency services in the population since individuals become more worried about whether they will be helped in time.

Staff shortages and mounting work pressure are another significant issue of ambulance services in addition to delays in response time. The ambulance services are currently facing a big workforce problem as staff turnover rates are high and there is a challenge of retaining experienced paramedics (Jones et al., 2023). It is found that workforce shortages have been growing over the past years, where vacancy rates have been on the increase, and a large number of paramedics are ready to leave the profession because of stress and workload pressure (Cook.,2025). The working conditions of ambulance which are characterized by long working hours, high-pressure circumstances, and emotional stress are also the reasons that lead to burnouts and job dissatisfaction in staff.

This is also aggravated by the fact that the number of people seeking services is on the rise and this puts even more strain on already overworked personnel. Research shows that the work of ambulance constantly goes under the pressure of increasing demand and the inadequacy of the working force, which leads to extended working hours and stress among the employees (Coggins., 2024). Moreover, the shortages associated with the workforce management, resource distribution, and financial limitations pose the difficulty of the services to provide sufficient staffing and high-quality care (Rezaei., 2025). All these cause a vicious circle whereby staff shortages translate to workload and consequently to further burnouts and staff leaving the profession.

The effects of staff shortages are enormous on the service quality and staff wellbeing. A decrease in staffing may result in delays in response, overworking of the staff that has been retained, and a deterioration in the overall quality of care service delivery to patients. Moreover, the burnout and high rates of stress among ambulance employees may adversely impact their mental condition and job satisfaction, which may provide an additional impetus to lose the workforce (Cook et al., 2025). Although there are efforts on policies to enhance efficiency, research indicates that some of these problems are not yet addressed and that the system is still impacted by old problems that have been experienced in the ambulance services (Newton, 2021). These issues in general bring to the fore the necessity of immediate

changes in the workforce planning, resource management and system integration in order to achieve the sustainability of ambulance services in the UK.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The challenge of the ambulance services in the UK still remains a serious issue with the delayed response time and staff deficiencies that are directly associated with the increased number of demand and system pressure. The problems have an impact on the safety and quality of service provided to the patient. In order to solve these issues, more government funding is necessary to increase the service capacity and enhance resources. Specific recruitment practices and more effective retention practices are also required, such as better working conditions, workable workloads, and mental health services to the personnel. As well, it is possible to invest in digital technologies and effective systems to enhance response time and general service delivery.

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