

AMBULANCE AND NHS SERVICES

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MODULE CODE : LCHS4003
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A POSTER DESCRIBING THE AMBULANCE SERVICE AND NHS HISTORY AND KEY PRINCIPLES.

AMBULANCE SERVICES



southampton ambulance services,2025

The ambulance service is the heart of the urgent and emergency care system (NHS). They play an essential role in the emergency care services. Helping patients access facilities they need close to their homes.

The trust is led by a unitary board, which consists of executive and non-executive directors. All the boards and directors are corporately and collaboratively accountable for organisational performance. (West Midlands Ambulance Services, 2025).

HISTORY

Ambulance service in the NHS was formally established in 1948, but its roots stretch back decades earlier. They evolved from volunteer-run transport into a professional emergency medical system. The Knights of St. John started the concept of Ambulance during the 11th-century Crusades. (Northampton General, 2021). In 1882, St. John's introduced an invalid transport corps for free to the poor. In 1912, Motor vehicles replaced horse-drawn ambulances. In 1918 national ambulance service was planes, and wartime ambulances were released to civilians. In 1925 Public Health Act provided transport for non-urgent cases, and ambulance services spread widely across the country until WW2. In 1937, the 999 telephone number was introduced. In 1964, the Millar Report recommended that the ambulance service should provide treatments as well as carry people to the hospital. In 1970/80, modernised communication was introduced, including helicopters and motorbikes to speed up the response times, and defibrillators became portable and were introduced into all ambulances. In the 1990's paramedics were introduced, and trainings were extended. (Northampton General, 2021).



AIMS AND CATEGORIES

They aim to assist and rescue patients and deliver the best outcome for healthcare services. (NHS). They provide life-saving care to patients in critical Conditions and it is highly demanded across the nation. There are different types of services the ambulances provide, and these are categorised numerically or colour coded; this is to ensure that the people with the most critical conditions get the right response the first time. (NHS, 2025).

- Red, also known as category 1, is for critical and life-threatening injuries such as cardiac arrest, patients struggling to breathe or blocked airways, serious accident injuries, etc.
- Green is considered for less life-threatening conditions. This is to make sure that the patients get the quickest response, which is expected to improve chances of survival. (NHS, 2025)
- Category 2 is for emergency calls such as burns, epilepsy and strokes. Once the ambulance identifies the state of the emergency, they will be able to transport the patient to the appropriate facility they need. They also take time when appropriate to assess the patient's condition. (NHS,2025)
- Category 3 is for urgent conditions, which include delayed pregnancies, non-severe burns and diabetes. These conditions may be treated in various homes by paramedics unless the condition worsens. (NHS, 2025)
- Category 4; non urgent for such as diarrhoea and vomiting or urinary infections, which usually respond to with a referral to GPs or other health care professionals, depending on the condition. (NHS, 2025)
- They are efficient and effective, which means they ensure that all care, both urgent and non-urgent, is met accordingly.

CHALLENGES

There are a few challenges the Ambulances face in delivering urgent and emergency care, including demand, funding and resourcing issues and most commonly, delays in transfers to hospitals.

The demands in the ambulance service are always high; they get calls from doctors, nurses and other health care professionals. Ambulance trusts are required to take patients to the hospital when other healthcare professionals identify the need as urgent. Contributing factors may include the high number of elderly patients with different conditions (National Audit Office, 2017).

2.2billion pounds was spent on the NHS ambulance trust, and £1.78 million was only for urgent and emergency activity in 2015-16. Funding for ambulance trust was increased by 16% just for urgent and emergency cases between 2011-12 and 2015-16. Over this period, the trust activity increased by 30% and incidents attended rose by 9%. (National Audit Office, 2017).



Anenurin Bevan, Minister of Health, on the first day of the National Health Service, 5 July 1948 at Park Hospital, Davyhulme, near Manchester
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NHS HISTORY

The National health service (NHS) was established in the year 1948 on the 5th of July in the United Kingdom and has since become the central part of British society. Britain was the first Western country to offer free medical care to the whole population and is now 75 years old still standing strong. (GOV.UK, 2023). They established that everyone could access the health care service or free no matter the age or the gender, having a family doctor meant that families could have free access to dentist, opticians, medicines, drugs and appliances, maternity services and hospital and specialist services. It was created in response to growing public demand for fair and accessible healthcare after the WW2, influenced by the Beveridge Report and Labour government's commitment to social reform. All this could be done by registering with a doctor, all appointments or relations with them were and are still confidential and the best part of it was, it was and is still free. (Royal society of Medicine, 2024)

PRINCIPLES AND STRUCTURE

The fundamental principles underlying the NHS were, and still are, that all services would be solely funded from general taxation and that they would generally be free and available to all, meaning Doctors and other healthcare services would get paid from the public funds from all contributing taxpayers. (GOV.UK, 1999).

The NHS is now structured around the Integrated Care System (ICS), which focuses on the regional collaboration, digital transformation and shifting care from hospitals to community settings. This functioning is shaped by the government mandates, funding pressures and efforts to improve access and efficiency. Before then, hospitals were previously run by voluntary charitable organisations, and the local government became responsible for the Regional Hospitals Boards. Long-term care was mostly delivered in large institutions before the 1990s. It's only in the more recent years that services for the elderly and people with mental illness have started to be integrated into mainstream hospital care. (DIDF, Health System Resource Centre, 1999).

The NHS productivity continues to improve and get more efficient, which means it's able to treat more patients without needing much extra funding. In 2023/2024, the NHS delivered 5% more care with only a tiny increase in income (0.12%). The acute sector on its own boosted productivity by over 2% in the first seven months. Thanks to improvements like new technology, better data use, smarter planning and stronger staff support, the NHS is on track to beat the £7 million in savings last year. These steps are helping shape the future of healthcare through the upcoming ten-year health plan. (NHS, 2025)

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