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News



HART on Show at Cosford

The Trust's Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) showed off its assets at a presentation to the other emergency services recently. Representatives from many of the Region's fire services, police forces and the RAF were at Cosford air base in Shropshire where Steve Wheaton (Regional Head of Specialist Operations) and Rich Bell (Specialist Education and Development Manager) described how HART had grown since the creation of the regional ambulance service, and its improvement on the resources and capabilities available prior to the merger. Steve said: "For more than two years we have transformed the way we deal



with emergency planning and respond to incidents. During that time we have looked at training, equipment, vehicles and structures. Thank you to staff from Emergency Preparedness, HART, the Press Office, Emergency Operations Centre, the decontamination course and Logistics for helping make the day happen." Writing to the Trust, Helen Braithwaite (Head of Regional Resilience at the Government Office for the West Midlands) said: "It really was an excellent event, well organised with plenty to see and do. The training and equipment day demonstrated how seriously WMAS has taken the threat and sought to build its capacity and capabilities through equipment and also significantly (and I think particularly noteworthy) through training and exercising staff."

Trust To Move Forward With EOC Changes

The Board of WMAS has agreed to move forward with plans to move the Emergency Operations Centre function for Coventry and Warwickshire from Leamington to Tollgate in Stafford. The move will see the area join the virtual control system that allows calls to be answered in either centre and ensures that the closest vehicle is always sent to the emergency call. The Board has said that it backs the proposal subject to the implementation being discussed with staff. Trust Chief Executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "It is important to state that there will be no redundancies involved in this change. It is clearly a difficult period for staff and we will be holding 1:1 meetings with each individual. Ideally, the majority of staff will move to work in Stafford, but where that is not possible, we will work with the individuals to find suitable alternative roles such as training to work on an ambulance vehicle. It is also important to stress that this is about improving patient care."

FAST is 100%

The latest audit of Face Arms Speech Time (FAST) testing in the West Midlands has shown that in the case of Stroke or mini stroke, the Clinical Performance Indicators showed 100% compliance. Matthew Ward, Regional Head of Cardiac and Stroke, said, "This is an excellent achievement for the Trust and I would like to thank staff for their hard work. The assessment and documentation of facial drooping, arm weakness and speech disturbance is essential for the ongoing management of Stroke cases. Early diagnosis of stroke can make a massive difference to the long term recovery of the patient, so achieving 100% has undoubtedly helped many patients."

Andy Band Jumps in to Help

On the evening of Monday 27th September, Technician Andy Band was on his way to work at Worcester when he saw someone in the River Severn near Carrington Bridge. He jumped in and, once the man was out of the water, he started resuscitation attempts and was joined by an ambulance crew, two RRVs and a BASICS Doctor from Mercia Accident Rescue Service. Sadly the man was confirmed dead shortly after arrival at Worcestershire Royal Hospital. Dr Leach said: "I would like to pay tribute to all of the ambulance staff at the scene. They were a very able and competent group who did an exceptional job at the scene." Referring to Andy Band, Dr. Leach added: "It takes real courage to do what he did."

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Pope Benedict XVI Visits Birmingham

Sunday 19th September saw Pope Benedict XVI visit Birmingham where he celebrated Mass in front of tens of thousands of pilgrims at Cofton Park. The Trust had been awarded the contract to provide medical cover for the event and at a number of other locations elsewhere in the city, including Hagley Road, scene of the Popemobile journey. Prior to the event, a series of staff briefings were held by Steve Wheaton, the Trust's Regional Head of Specialist Operations. On the



day itself, in conjunction with St. John Ambulance, First Aid posts, a medical centre and a temporary minor injury unit were set up, while at the Trust's headquarters in Brierley Hill, Gold Control was running. A total of 97 patients were seen; seven of which needed hospital treatment. Mark Gough, Service Delivery Director (Operations), said: "This event was meticulously planned over many months and executed with precision on the day. It was a long and hard day for staff who worked tirelessly, with many giving up what otherwise would have been their day-off. They are a credit to the Service." Steve Coneys, from the Strategic Health Authority, added: "Thanks to all of your staff that have made this high profile visit the smooth venture it was. Well done and thanks."

Thank You Letter in 'The Shuttle'

The following letter appeared in a recent 'Shuttle' (newspaper in Kidderminster):

"After returning from a spell in Worcestershire Royal Hospital, I wish to publicly express my gratitude for my treatment. From the paramedics to all staff including the cleaners, I was treated with the utmost respect, expertise and kindness in three different units and I thank them all for saving my life. Mrs Mavis Crumpton Lea Bank Avenue Kidderminster"

WMAS Staff Visit Napley Lodge Farm Nursery

Two staff from Staffordshire attended Napley Lodge Farm, in Norton-in-Hales to help the children with their 'People Who Help Us' project in September. Ally Bell (Paramedic) and Fiona James, (Technician) attended the nursery and spoke to 20 children ranging from one to five years of age, about what they do. They went equipped with a mini paramedic outfit and lots of activities for the children to take part in, including a quiz about how to dial 999 and what questions might be asked of them when they do, word searches and colouring in sheets. The children had the opportunity to take a look around an ambulance and some equipment whilst trying on helmets and jackets. Talking about the visit Ally said: "It was great fun! I think the girls at the nursery enjoyed it as much as the kids did!! Lots of kids wanted to sit in the drivers seat but with everything that flashes and beeps on the ambulance, the most popular gadget was the ramp at the back!"



Real Rescues for EOC Staff

Three call takers based at Tollgate EOC were recently filmed for television show Real Rescues. The programme producers contacted the press office after reading in the local press about the excellent job that each one had done in providing instruction to families at their time of need. Hayley Pickford, who gave instruction to a 5 year old when his step dad collapsed, Stacey Bagnell, who gave instruction a family when their child was choking and Sarah Bamber, who helped to deliver a baby are all set to star in the new series starting in Autumn.



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Andy Retires from Coventry Ambulance Station



Colleagues from Coventry Station wished Andy 'flash' Orwin a happy and restful retirement after 26 years with the service. Andy and his partner Frankie were presented with champagne, flowers, and a cheque by Group Station Manager Pete Head. Andy first started working on Patient Transport Services and after six months transferred to A & E as a technician and then trained as a paramedic. He enjoyed his last 17 years working with his crewmate Gary Plummer. Andy will be missed on station for his witty one liners, his intellectual humour and staff will miss his free copies of "The Times" newspaper. Andy intends to spend his retirement travelling, cycling and playing golf.

Defibs for Docs

More than 60 medical practices in South Birmingham are now the proud owners of a life saving piece of kit, thanks to partnership working between West Midlands Ambulance Service and NHS South Birmingham. During the last few months, almost 140 Primary Care Trust staff have been trained in basic life support and how to use their new automated external defibrillators (AED); a vital piece of lifesaving equipment funded by WMAS. Doctors, nurses and admin staff alike are now primed and ready if a patient suffers a cardiac arrest. Wake Green Surgery in Moseley is one of the larger practices to receive an AED with 10,000 patients registered with them. Dr Gareth Stuttard, from the surgery, said: "It's an invaluable and very clever piece of life saving kit which will certainly prove its worth. Fortunately, we've never had anyone suffer a cardiac arrest here but the AED gives us the security to know we can give immediate life saving treatment." Pictured left to right: Elaine George (Cardiovascular Lead Nurse). Emma Wilkins (WMAS BBC Community Response Manager) with Dr Gareth Stuttard.



Life Saved After Medicine Shock

A Shropshire Councillor has spoken of how he nearly died after a severe reaction to medicine he was taking. Paul Wynne, who represents Adderley and Moreton Say, collapsed while judging a gardening competition in September. He had been taking penicillin. He thanked WMAS paramedic Helen Beard who he believes saved his life. He told the Market Drayton Advertiser: "I lost all control of myself, I couldn't breathe properly, went bright red and suddenly fell to the ground, without being able to raise my arms. I was in a serious way, but Julie and Helen Beard, who knows me and my wife, were there to help. If it wasn't for Helen's quick actions, it could have been very different. I want to say a big thank you to all the ambulance staff who came because without their help, there may not have been such a happy ending."

Paramedic Was Punched in Face Three Times

A man was handed a suspended prison sentence after punching a paramedic three times in the face. The Malvern Gazette reported that Tomasz Delgiado, from Malvern, pleaded guilty to assault by beating and failing to attend an earlier hearing at Worcester Magistrates Court. A statement from the victim about the incident in December 2009 described him as "swaying around and very unsteady on his feet", then "a little agitated and a little aggressive" when his blood pressure was checked, before he punched the paramedic. Delgiado, in a statement, said he was having a seizure, his defence said: "He had little recollection of what had gone on, but he regrets his actions." Delgiado was sentenced to 16 weeks in prison, suspended for two years. He was made subject to a 12-month community order, with a supervision requirement and 120 hours of unpaid work. He was ordered to pay the victim £80 compensation and court costs of £100, as well as a £15 victim surcharge. For the Bail Act offence, Delgiado was fined £55.

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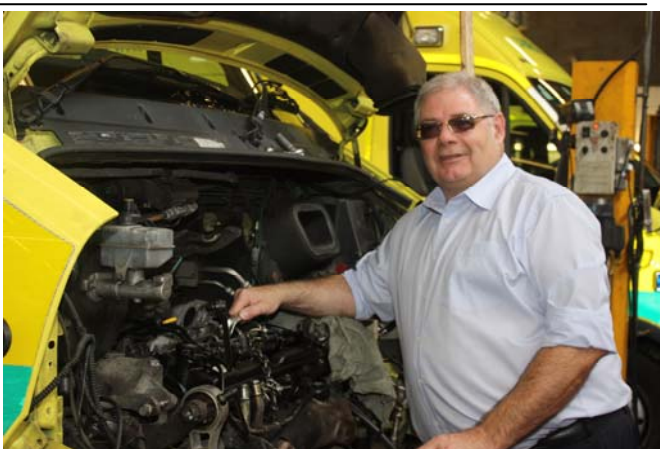


Scottish Inspector Visits Bromsgrove

The Trust's work on Infection Prevention and Control has been praised by the Scottish equivalent of the Care Quality Commission, known as the "Healthcare Environment Inspectorate". Its regional inspector Alastair McGown visited Bromsgrove station last week as part of preparations for inspection methodology for the Scottish Ambulance Service. The CQC suggested visiting WMAS as an example of good practice. Mr. McGown said: "I found the whole visit extremely worthwhile." He highlighted practices, proactive work with suppliers to find solutions, the introduction of disinfectant wipes, storage of medical supplies, cleaning and maintenance of ambulances, specifically the introduction of the disinfectant wipes which can be used everywhere and most notably in the back of ambulances. Citing the introduction of glove pouches as an example, he described it as "A demonstration to me, of the thought that WMAS have given to implement practical solutions."

Dave Gears up for Retirement

After 37 years of servicing and fixing ambulances, Fleet Manager Dave Robertson closed his tool box for the final time when he retired from the Trust in September. In 1972, Dave began his career as a mechanic at the tender age of 18 at Walsall Ambulance Station when the ambulance service was part of Walsall City Council. During his 37 years, Dave has worked at Walsall station and Henrietta Street's workshop. In 2000, Dave moved to Dudley workshops and was promoted to Workshop Supervisor. In 2007 he became Fleet Manager for Birmingham and the Black Country. During a farewell presentation, Craig Cooke, Resilience and Support Services Director, said: "He's always got solutions to problems, answers to questions and has helped to keep the wheels of ambulances turning across WMAS. We wish you a happy and long retirement." Graham Cann, Regional Head of Fleet, said: "There's nothing he doesn't know about ambulances! Dave has been a great asset to the Trust and will be missed. On behalf of everyone from Fleet, a very big thank you!"



Emergency Bikers Top Rated Show

The final episode of Emergency Bikers which aired on 15th September saw a staggering 1.7 million viewers glued to the telly! Now that the series has finished, Motorcycle Paramedics Mark Hayes, Steve Harris and Barry Rudge are now facing the reality of being famous by signing autographs and posing for photographs from avid fans! Jane Lomas, Executive producer of RDF Television who produced the programme for Channel Five, said: "The last show in Emergency Bikers surpassed all expectations, peaking at 1.7m, averaging 1.5m and emerging as Five's top-rating show that Wednesday. Fabulous news and everyone is delighted." If you missed an episode, you can catch up with the series by visiting 'Demand Five'.

Minsterley Show

Community First Responders from Shrewsbury and Rea Valley braved the rain to be at the Minsterley Show to promote their schemes and recruit new volunteers. There was a healthy level of interest from the visitors, despite a lower attendance than in previous years because of the weather. Thank you to Louise Purchase, Sean Cloak, Neil Philips (all pictured with Aimee Yarrington) and Lynne Onions for their help.



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MP Visit to Kidderminster Station

Mark Garnier, MP for Wyre Forest visited Kidderminster station in September to hear about the Trust's plans for 'Make Ready'. Mr. Garnier met Adrian Ball (Group Station Manager) and Nick Henry (General Manager, West Mercia) who described how Kidderminster station was built in the 1960s, designed for five staff. Fifty years later, 51 staff are based there. Nick Henry said: "We have invested significantly in Kidderminster but we have outgrown the station. We have upskilled our staff and increased the number of ambulances." Mr. Henry added that £100,000, which he described as a "conservative estimate", would be needed to make the station big enough for current staff and capable of meeting the basic standards of Infection Prevention and Control. Under 'Make Ready' Community Response Posts would be created and that ambulance service cover would not be reduced. Mr. Garnier plans to visit Staffordshire where 'Make Ready' has been place for a number of years.



Para Responds to 999s in Israel

A paramedic from Stourbridge station jumped on board with a crew from Magen David Adom Ambulance Service to witness a day in the life in Israel during a holiday in August. Andrew Nuttall went to Alkali 2 ambulance station in Tel Aviv in August and toured the station, its vehicles, a blood donation unit and the control centre for Tel Aviv; serving a population of around one million people. Andrew observed a paramedic crew and went to a woman with a suspected cranial bleed and a man who had come off his motorcycle. Andrew (pictured) said: "The vehicles were a little different, with no standing (head) room. The kit was similar though and more morphine was carried; in response to multiple casualty terrorist attacks. It was a privilege to be invited to observe at MDA and I found very little difference between WMAS/MDA paramedics both in assessment or treatment of patients, their outlook and humour, and their desire to serve the community. The only difference between Stourbridge and Tel Aviv was the heat – 38 degrees Celsius!"



Thanking You With Appreciation

A 'thank you' email was recently sent to the Ashley and Loggerheads CFR scheme from a relative of a patient who they tended to. The e-mail reads: "I believe it was a member of your team that responded to a 999 call to my husband who had collapsed at home in Woore at around 1700hrs on Saturday 4th September. Unfortunately, I did not get the gentleman's name just that he was from Loggerheads First Response. Could you please thank him very much for all that he did. Although my husband sadly did not pull through he was given the best chance possible to survive by your colleague responding so quickly followed by the main ambulance and paramedic and the treatment in the ambulance on the way to A & E. Thanking you with appreciation for all that you do."

Farewell Phil

Phil Hayes retired from the Trust following his last shift in August. Phil, Tollgate Duty Manager, began his career in the ambulance service in 1978 prior to which he worked for British Airways. He became a Technician and moved to Shropshire in 1981. After working his way up to Leading Ambulanceman he decided he wanted to work within the EOC in Shropshire and did so from 1992. After 16 years in the Shropshire Control he moved to MP, with regionalisation, before finally working at the Tollgate EOC prior to his retirement. His friends and colleges within the service would all like to wish him well for the future.



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Israeli Para Visits HART

A paramedic from the Israeli Ambulance Service went along to the Trust's Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) base recently. Sarah Cascella qualified as a paramedic for Magen David Adom Ambulance Service in October 2009 and is based in Kiryat Gat. During a normal day, Sarah responds to 15 rocket attacks and regularly deals with patients with serious trauma injuries. HART paramedics Brendan O'Sullivan and James



Dinneen spent a morning with Sarah at the HART base in Oldbury. Sarah saw the range of HART vehicles and equipment the paramedics work with and spent time sharing stories and talking about the similarities and differences of their job. Sarah said: "It was wonderful to share experiences with Brendan and James. It was interesting to see the equipment they carry, especially the kit to deal with multiple patients. It's great to see that though we're from two very different countries, we work in the same way."

Performance



August 2010					
	WMAS	BBC	C&W	HS&W	STAFFS
Call Connect (target - 75% of calls within 8 mins)	78.7%	80.0%	79.1%	76.5%	77.2%
Cat A19 (target - 95% of calls within 19 mins)	98.4%	99.5%	98.1%	95.9%	98.3%
Cat B19 (target - 95% of calls within 19 mins)	95.5%	95.5%	95.1%	94.3%	96.8%
Cat C30 + referrals (Target - 95%)	98.7%	98.4%	99.4%	99.2%	98.5%

September 2010					
	WMAS	BBC	C&W	HS&W	STAFFS
Call Connect (target - 75% of calls within 8 mins)	78.7%	79.6%	78.4%	77.0%	78.2%
Cat A19 (target - 95% of calls within 19 mins)	98.3%	99.2%	97.9%	96.4%	98.2%
Cat B19 (target - 95% of calls within 19 mins)	95.7%	95.5%	94.9%	95.9%	97.1%
Cat C30 + referrals (Target - 95%)	98.7%	98.2%	99.3%	99.2%	99.1%