



Achievements

2018/19



Introduction

The 2018/19 year was packed full of achievements that we have noted in this book. We hope they show how we're developing our services to make sure they are fit for the future, and to help us achieve our aim of being the best ambulance service in the country.

Within the year there were a number of developments; after a Care Quality Commission inspection we were rated 'good' by the health regulator, it was the 70th anniversary of the NHS in July and we marked the occasion with an edible treat, our Transforming Patient Care programme continued to help our crews treat more patients closer to home and take less people to hospital emergency departments, there were award wins for fantastic work across a variety of directorates, we improved our public health offering by providing advice on living well to routine transport patients, we recruited to 601 frontline roles, launched the Star in a Car campaign to encourage more people to sign-up as volunteer car drivers, basic life support awareness sessions were delivered to over 80 thousand members of the public (a huge proportion on Restart a Heart Day), the BBC commissioned Dragonfly Film and TV to produce BAFTA winning documentary Ambulance with us here in the North West and Derek Cartwright left the trust after a 32 year career which saw him progress from patient transport assistant to chief executive, paving the way for Daren Mochrie to join NWS as chief executive from 1 April 2019.



489 defibrillators installed
284 additional community first responders



1,337,175 emergency calls
1,564,219 NHS 111 calls



1.5 million routine journeys



601 frontline staff recruited

What follows is a snapshot of the things that the organisation and our people achieved in the last year which are enabling us to progress to being an outstanding ambulance service.

As we move into 2019/20, we continue to strive to provide every patient with the right care, at the right time, in the right place; every time.

Thumbs up from OFSTED

Teaching and learning standards for apprentices in our service were given positive feedback from the regulator OFSTED when we were randomly selected as the first new NHS employer provider in the country to receive an early monitoring visit.

OFSTED found that our organisation was making 'reasonable progress' across all three monitoring areas. Senior leaders at the trust were found to have a 'clear workforce strategy and operational plan' to ensure that apprentices 'receive good-quality education and training to enable them to perform their job roles to a high standard'. Apprentice recruitment was found to be 'rigorous' and most apprentices 'make good progress'.

At the time of the review, 236 apprentices were employed at North West Ambulance Service.

PTS boosts public health

Our Patient Transport Service extended its offer to support and promote public health. This preventative work is part of our organisational strategy and the contact our PTS crews have with often vulnerable and older patients presents an excellent opportunity for us to make a difference.

Care assistants have maximised their time with patients en route to appointments by providing them with health information leaflets created in partnership with clinical commissioning groups, Age UK and Public Health England.

PTS also rolled out the Raising Concerns for Patients scheme to support patients with varied needs and help identify and access the relevant support.

The scheme is designed to help crews who may observe or be informed of a patient at risk of falls, fire, dementia, mental health, isolation and loneliness or other issues. A procedure is in place for PTS crews to access our Clinical Hub to make a referral or seek advice.

Insight for armed forces leavers

Leavers of the armed forces were invited to an insight day to enable them to apply for positions in the service and celebrate the work of our reservists.

Consultant paramedics at the heart of leadership

Recognising the value of clinicians in leadership, we introduced additional consultant paramedic roles to the service.

A consultant paramedic is an expert clinician undertaking a role that covers clinical practice, education, research and management.

Our consultants are Dan Smith - Greater Manchester, Matt Dunn – Lancashire, Matt House – Cumbria, Nick Sutcliffe – Cheshire, John Collins – Merseyside and Steve Bell – research and Vinny Romano – education and learning.

Our consultants are strategic clinicians who have developed and expanded their scope of practice and develop areas of new and innovative clinical practice for paramedics delivering patient care.

GoodSAM

We extended our coverage with GoodSAM; an application that uses innovative technology to link a qualified lifesaver with a patient in cardiac arrest, by allowing eligible staff to sign up as responders from Manchester Royal Infirmary, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service and North West Air Ambulance.

Responders who sign up to the GoodSAM app are alerted to potential cardiac arrest patients within the nearby area. The technology behind the app is embedded within the NWS control rooms and is automatically activated when someone calls 999 with a life-threatening emergency that is thought to be a cardiac arrest.

An ambulance resource is dispatched to the patient as normal and the GoodSAM system automatically alerts the three nearest volunteer responders. To date, 586 of our GoodSAM responders are NWS staff.



Surgical airway review nominated for award

A review undertaken by Consultant Paramedic, Steve Bell was nominated for a British Paramedic Journal award as judged by a 'Golden Nugget' presentation at the College of Paramedics conference.

Steve's review examined a procedure performed by our advanced and consultant paramedics which was previously restricted to the remit of doctors.

Surgical cricothyroidotomy was introduced into the scope of practice of our advanced and consultant paramedics in 2011 as an emergency airway management intervention for otherwise unmanageable patient airways, resulting from traumatic or medical aetiologies.

The evaluation demonstrated a favourable success rate when compared to other professional groups undertaking the procedure.

Get help on the go with 111

People in the North West can access urgent medical advice online, following the launch of the NHS 111 online service at 111.nhs.uk.

The free service is a convenient digital alternative to using the NHS 111 telephone helpline, providing members of the public with urgent medical advice and signposting to other urgent care services straight from their smartphone, laptop or other digital device.

After asking users to enter their postcode and symptoms, it gives tailored advice on how to manage them, and/or generates a call back from a healthcare professional, if required.

First aid in schools

The Department for Education announced that lifesaving first aid is set to be part of the national school curriculum from 2020. The plans say that pupils should know basic treatment for common injuries, life-saving skills including how to do CPR and the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

In 2015, we hosted an event with Andy Burnham who was a local MP at the time, at the House of Commons for all MPs, lords and partner organisations to share our vision of educating the public about CPR and defibrillators.

NHS 70

In 2018 the NHS celebrated its 70th anniversary and here at NWS we firmly believe that any good celebration must include cake, so to celebrate 70 years of our unique and extraordinary National Health Service on 5 July, we gave our staff a treat for all their hard work and dedication with some birthday cake.

The trust teamed up with Icky Sticky Cake Company - a family run business from Greater Manchester, which sources many of their ingredients locally - to provide 5,000 cupcakes for our people across 70 sites. This special treat to mark a very special occasion was funded by the North West Ambulance Charity.

LGBT conference

The national ambulance service LGBT conference took place in Manchester in August 2018, ahead of the pride celebratory weekend. Resources that can be used by ambulance services to improve staff interaction with trans patients (and staff) were showcased on the day. Feedback from the national and local LGBT networks about the support NWAS offered for the event was positive.

Money for ambulances

It was our first full year operating under the national Ambulance Response Programme which aims to get the right response, first time, to patients who contact us for help in urgent and emergency situations.

Work to improve response times was boosted by a summer announcement by the health minister of £6 million for extra emergency ambulances in the North West.

Paramedics develop specialist training for responding in difficult conditions

Bespoke training sessions were delivered to ambulance clinicians and emergency service colleagues in Cumbria to help emergency services manage the challenges of working in hostile and remote environments.

Ongoing training is essential for dealing with the difficult terrain and complex medical conditions which is why paramedics in Barrow-in-Furness and Kendal developed development sessions for their colleagues.

The sessions cover a number of essential topics including trauma, heat illness and hypothermia, stepwise airway management, pit stop CPR, traumatic cardiac arrest and major incident management.

Community Heroes Award

Our Complementary Resources team was named a winner at BBC Radio Lancashire Community Heroes Awards for the Lancashire Lifesavers campaign, where basic life support and defibrillator awareness sessions were delivered to 2,800 people.

The team won the Community Project of the Year Award - given to an innovative project that has helped to genuinely change the lives of others within the community.



TV documentary

People across the country joined our frontline staff from the comfort of their own living rooms when the BAFTA winning documentary *Ambulance* began to air on BBC One.

Series four and five of the prime time show were filmed in the North West. Filming initially took place with crews in Greater Manchester and in our emergency operations centres before moving to Merseyside.

The programme has been an unexpected gem in the BBC schedule pulling in a large proportion of young and ethnic minority viewers.

Star in a Car

A campaign launched to recruit more volunteers from our communities to take people to and from routine hospital appointments. Describing each volunteer as a 'star in a car', the campaign used a range of publicity materials to recruit more stars, and their wheels.

There are some fascinating facts highlighting the work by volunteer drivers. Their combined service currently comes to a total of 150,000 volunteer-hours worked per year. They drive a combined total distance of 5,892,446 miles per year. That equates to travelling 236 times around the world or making 12 return-trips to the moon!

Representing in Leeds

Representatives from our service attended the first national ambulance BME conference in Leeds. 10 people attended from different roles within the trust to find out more about the impact race inequalities can have on staff and on patients.

Confidence in disability

We obtained Disability Confident Employer status in November 2018. The number of staff working at the trust with disabilities is continuing to increase and the Disability Confident scheme will support us to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to our workplace.

We look after our people

Our health and wellbeing team won a HPMA North West 'We look after our people' award for the Invest in Yourself (Happy, Healthy, Fit) programme in our emergency operations centres.

Mersey Heartbeats

Following in the footsteps of our Lancashire Lifesavers movement, 1,350 people in Merseyside learnt how to save a life as part of the Mersey Heartbeats campaign.

NWAS teamed up with BBC Radio Merseyside and Merseytravel to provide a simple one hour session where people were taught what to do in the event of a cardiac arrest, including how to do CPR and use a defibrillator.

Double gold win at CIPR awards

The Communications team scooped two gold awards at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations PRide Awards 2018 for our Make the Right Call and Hero Next Door campaigns.

Winter campaign, Make The Right Call, used quirky social media techniques such as 'Fake News' and 'WTF – Ways to Fail' to catch attention and spread the message about the appropriate ways to use 999 whilst community first responder recruitment campaign, Hero Next Door, used case studies and animations to highlight how everyday people can become neighbourhood heroes.

Judges commented how they were "blown away" with the campaign to recruit new community first responders and that Make The Right Call was a "stand out winner."

NHS Long Term Plan

Health and care leaders came together in 2018 to develop a Long Term Plan to make the NHS fit for the future, and to get the most value for patients out of every pound of taxpayers' investment.

We have already begun addressing some of the key points of the plan through our Transforming Patient Care work streams and other improvement initiatives, for example: clinical pathway and urgent care practitioner development to support us to do more 'hear and treat' and 'see and treat' of patients in the community, interoperability and digital solutions to increase efficiency, improving care for mental health patients through partnership schemes and having mental health professionals working in our EOCs, a focus on developing care for children, the introduction of 111 online across the region and closer working with hospital trust colleagues to help improve handover times.

Restart a Heart

Basic life support awareness sessions were provided to over 80 thousand people this year – a huge proportion of which was done on the internationally recognised Restart a Heart Day in October. Crowds at a football match between Manchester City and Burnley were able to benefit from these very simple skills that can make such a big difference to someone in cardiac arrest.

NWAS is a good organisation

We were rated 'good' by the healthcare regulator, Care Quality Commission (CQC), following an inspection of our organisation. As well as the overall rating of 'good', we received 'good' ratings for three of our core services; urgent and emergency care, emergency operations centres and resilience.

CQC witnessed polite, caring and respectful frontline ambulance staff, holding the hands of patients who were scared and acting with compassion and respect towards patients. All ambulance staff said they were proud of their profession and CQC said this was reflected in them providing good quality care.

#GetBehind999

#GetBehind999 asked for public support in condemning acts of violence and aggression against emergency service staff. With the aid of an online pledge link, we asked people to share the message that the 1,249 acts of violence and aggression against ambulance staff in the North West last year were unacceptable and can have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of staff as well as our ability to respond to emergencies.

The consumption of alcohol plays a pivotal role in these acts of aggression and so as well as the online pledge, we gave pubs and clubs campaign posters and beer mats to press home the message.

With the introduction of the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018, the maximum sentence for assaulting an emergency worker doubled from six to twelve months in prison.

The new law also means that judges must consider tougher sentences for a range of other offences - including GBH and sexual assault if the victim is an emergency worker and also covers the role of volunteers such as NWAS' community first responders.

Ambulance service trials new role to give patients the right care closer to home

Nurses were given patient facing roles for the first time in the ambulance service in a pilot that focused on providing patients with the right care closer to home.

Urgent care practitioners are nurses and paramedics who respond to patients who have called 999 but do not need an emergency ambulance and could possibly receive support and treatment at home, rather than having to go to hospital.

While nurses have been part of the ambulance workforce for a number of years, it was the first time they had been employed in NWAS in a role responding to patients.

Evaluation of the first few months of activity showed that 72% of patients seen by the urgent care practitioners has been provided with the right care, without needing an emergency ambulance to take them to hospital - this is known as 'see and treat'.

In total, the pilot is estimated to have saved more than 1,000 ambulance journeys during a 90 day period, which is approximately 1,625 hours or almost 68 full days of emergency ambulance time.



Positive action

NWAS was recognised at the Asian Fire Service Awards in November 2018. This well-established public sector award celebrates the work of those taking a proactive approach to equality. Kairen Smith, Recruitment Positive Action Officer, was named the individual award winner in the category of 'Positive Action – an individual who has over the last 12 months undertaken innovative practices to attract or develop staff from diverse communities'. The nomination had detailed her work on our pre-degree programme, taking her out into communities and having a 'local' approach to recruiting from diverse communities across the North West.

Seeing red

Advanced medical staff are more easily identifiable with the introduction of red epaulettes for senior clinicians. The change replaced the former green epaulettes worn on the shoulders as part of our uniform to distinguish roles, with the aim to make it easier for ambulance crews to identify a person with more senior clinical skills in the event of a large scale or major incident.

This comes after an internal evaluation of the ambulance response to the Manchester Arena attack in May 2017 where staff noted it would be helpful for advanced paramedics, consultant paramedics and doctors to be more easily seen at a glance.

Green epaulettes for other members of staff including paramedics, emergency medical technicians and senior paramedics remain the same.

Ambulance scheme to reduce unnecessary A&E admissions awarded

A multi-agency 'green car' scheme to reduce the number of unnecessary A&E admissions won an Innovation and Quality Improvement Award at the Countess of Chester Hospital's Celebration of Achievement Awards.

Led by North West Ambulance Service and Countess of Chester Hospital, the scheme sees a paramedic and physiotherapist join up to create one emergency service resource available to attend 999 incidents where the patient may benefit from support in the community.

The scheme is primarily aimed at patients who have fallen. It provides a valuable joined-up service by not only helping patients remain safely at home but gives a full therapy review of their home environment and abilities.

Staff Survey shows culture changes

The results of this year's NHS Staff Survey showed improvements in organisational culture with statistically significant differences since last year's ratings for morale, equality, diversity and inclusion, safety and staff engagement.

Paramedic awarded fellowship to support mental health

Consultant Paramedic, Vinny Romano was awarded a prestigious Winston Churchill Fellowship, a unique overseas research grant provided by The Winston Churchill Trust.

Vinny was awarded the fellowship for 2019 to visit the USA and Canada to research staff support systems within the emergency services. During his trip, Vinny will meet up with his overseas counterparts to explore research they have done around support for emergency services staff. He intends to bring back his knowledge and learning so that it can be used to make positive changes in the trust.

Time to Change Blue Light Pledge

We re-signed the Time to Change Blue Light Pledge to show our commitment to improving mental health and challenging the stigma associated with mental health conditions.

We initially supported the national 'Blue Light Programme' led by the mental health charity MIND, and a pledge committing to support staff was signed in 2016. A lot has happened since then and to reflect the progress made, and the future aspirations to continue to improve mental health support for our staff, a revised action plan has been completed entitled 'Blue Light - Time to Change' in order to allow the trust to re-pledge its commitment three years on.

A major achievement is the increased number of blue light champions in post. Champions are existing members of staff who offer one to one support for any mental health concerns their colleagues may have, whether that be due to attending a particularly traumatic incident, or an issue which may be happening at home. In 2016 there were just four champions, today there are almost 100 across the organisation.

In a recent evaluation, 85 per cent of staff said the trust takes positive action on health and wellbeing; an eleven per cent increase in three years.

Alliance saves £1 million through joint procurement of fleet management system

The Northern Ambulance Alliance (NAA) improved the way it manages fleet information whilst simultaneously reducing costs and creating the ability to benchmark data across alliance ambulance trusts through a shared five year contract with Civica Tranman.

This was the very first time a collaborative procurement has been undertaken by the NAA. The joint purchase replaces existing fleet management systems with an innovative, fit for purpose system which supports fleet managers to reduce vehicle costs through more efficient data capture and analysis.



This Time Next Year

After having his own life saved by a volunteer, Chris Ennis from Ribble Valley wanted to give something back by becoming a community first responder (CFR) and pledged to do this on Davina McCall's ITV show 'This Time Next Year'.

The programme features ordinary people pledging to transform their lives in extraordinary ways over the course of 12 months. It followed Chris throughout the year where he began training to become a CFR less than a year after surviving a cardiac arrest whilst playing golf at Clitheroe Golf Club.

Chris started breathing again thanks to an amazing team effort from bystanders at the golf club along with a local CFR who attended in his own time and NWS clinicians. He was taken to hospital where he was given a life-saving heart operation and was back playing golf just six months later when he pledged to become a responder himself.

Charity to support staff and save lives

North West Ambulance Charity was established to raise money to support emergency service staff and local communities. The charity funds lifesaving equipment, education programmes and other projects to benefit the health, wellbeing and safety of patients, staff and the wider community.

Ambulance service praised by minister for apprenticeships

Apprentices at NWS met with Rt Hon Anne Milton MP, Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills and Chris Green MP for Bolton West as the trust was named one of the top performing apprenticeship employers in the country.

Employing apprentices in a wide range of roles including frontline emergency medical technicians, ICT, finance, communications and fleet mechanics, we were thanked for our commitment, enthusiasm and drive for apprenticeships.

In her first visit to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week, Anne Milton MP met with apprentices from different areas of our service and expressed the benefits of offering these learning opportunities to further grow a skilled workforce.

Inter-facility transfers and healthcare professional requests

As part of the Ambulance Response Programme (ARP), new national frameworks for healthcare professional (HCP) requests for ambulance transport were developed by the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) and approved in collaboration with ambulance commissioners, NHS England, NHS Improvement and other key stakeholders.

The purpose of the frameworks is to support the development of local agreements that are more consistent nationally, and which provide HCP requested transport in a timeframe that is equitable with other patients accessing 999 ambulance services.

We became one of four ambulance trusts to initially pilot the new national frameworks for inter-facility transfers (IFTs) and HCP requests for ambulances, prior to roll out across the country.

Thanks to a team effort from EOC and transformation colleagues, we recruited to a new EMD support role, introduced a new call-handling module and launched a new, dedicated HCPs telephone number.

Following an in-depth evaluation of the pilot, which was delivered to the national implementation board, we received positive feedback for the successful way in which we implemented the new framework and communicated and engaged with our healthcare professional colleagues.

We hosted a workshop day for representatives from other ambulance trusts, where we shared our lessons learnt from the pilot and offered advice ahead of the wider roll-out of the new frameworks.

Hospital handover 90 day improvement collaborative

In response to the ongoing 'hospital handover' challenge, we brought together six hospitals with local NWS staff to work collaboratively over 90 days to reduce hospital handover average turnaround times to 20 minutes by March 2019.

Using quality improvement (QI) methodology and supported by organisational and QI leaders, the six sites developed a firm understanding of the local hospital process, agreed change ideas to improve the process and tested and re-tested improved and new ways of working.

Teams met to share their work, develop improvement ideas, review data and enhance skills. Patient stories were used to remind and educate staff on the impact delays can have on people.

Key areas of focus included developing a local triage team, improved tools for verbal communication, consistent access to hospital equipment, development of clinical pathways, and a handover safety checklist.

As a result of the collaborative the six teams reduced average hospital handover time by 6%. Whilst they have yet to achieve an average of 20 minutes, the best performing team is currently at 23 minutes daily average – a 25% improvement.

On average 8 hours a day have been saved from handovers that took longer than 30 minutes across the collaborative, a 10% improvement. One team has achieved a 70% improvement in daily lost hours.

We're dementia friendly

Pledging to raise awareness of the impact of dementia and support patients living with the condition, over six thousand NWS staff are now 'Dementia Friends'.

Dementia Friends is an initiative set up by the Alzheimer's Society to change people's perceptions and challenge the stigma associated with dementia.

With one in every six people over the age of 80 experiencing dementia, we have built dementia awareness sessions into our annual mandatory training package and all patient-facing staff are given classroom based sessions helping them to understand how best to care for patients with dementia alongside the opportunity to become a Dementia Friend.

We were the first ambulance service to specifically ask patients booking planned routine transport if they have dementia or a memory related condition, to help give them more individualised care centred on their needs.

Performance improves in 111

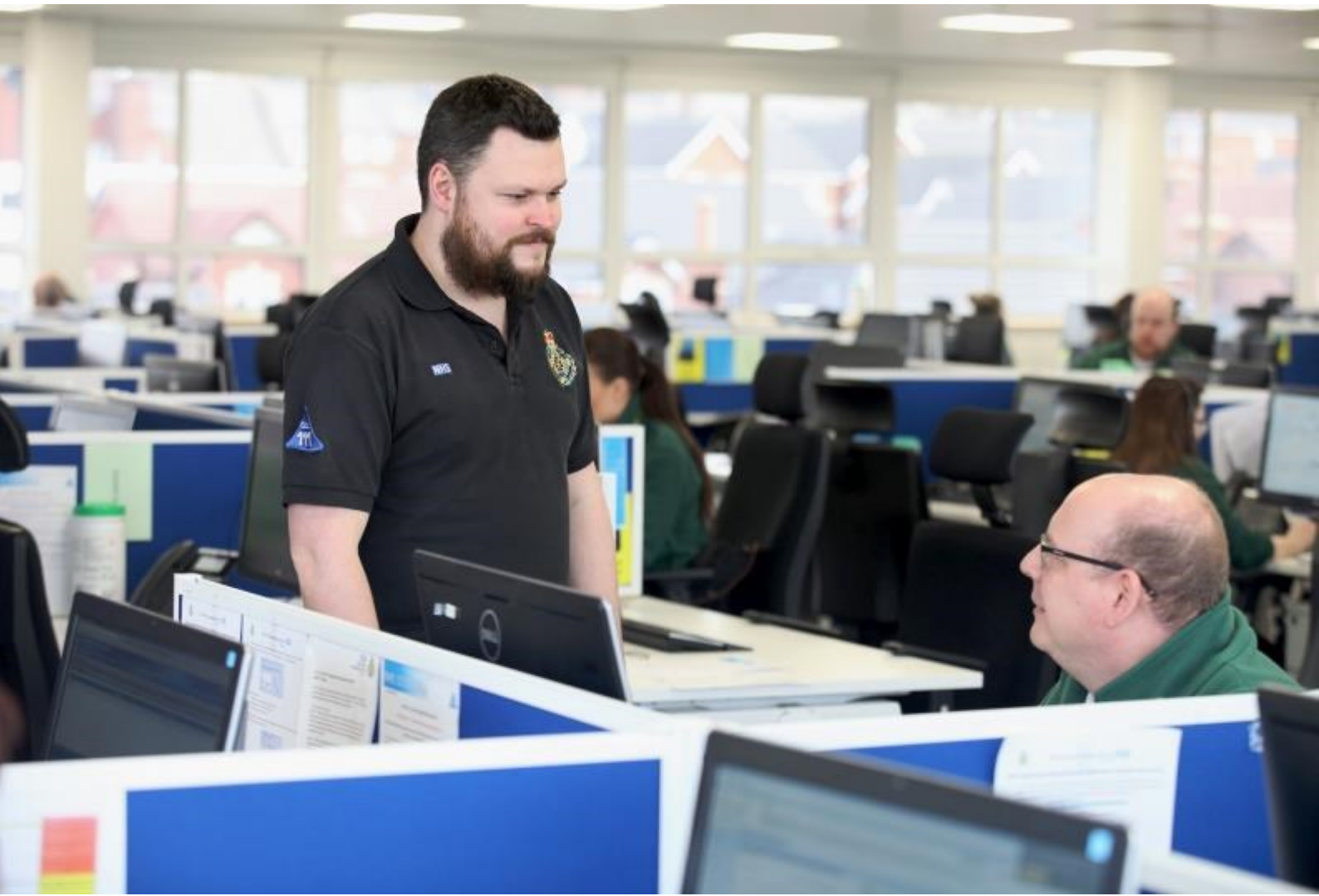
NHS 111 saw a significantly steady rise in performance in the last half of the year, producing the highest performance levels since August 2017.

As a direct result, the North West NHS 111 service was ranked in the top three performing providers of the 111 service in England for clinical call back within 10 minutes. It is also ranked sixth in the country for calls answered within 60 seconds, and on last review its call abandonment rate was at 2.6 percent which is well below the National NHS England standard of less than 5 percent.

A variety of new projects were implemented across NHS 111, aimed at making it more efficient, which resulted in an improved service for patients, including homeworking for clinical staff and additional supportive measures for new starters.

In November 2018 a team of 111 peer supporters was implemented and approval was gained to train a team of eight mental health first aiders, both designed to offer extra support to staff.

Thanks to the improvements within our 111 service, staffing numbers are at an all-time high.



Working in Psynergy

Our mental health response pilot with Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust and Lancashire Constabulary proved successful in providing the most appropriate care, support and treatment for those in crisis.

The Psynergy pilot launched in December 2018 across Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre and involved a senior mental health nurse, paramedic and a police officer forming as a crew in an NWAS vehicle to jointly attend to people in crisis, in order to most suitably triage and offer the right care and advice.

The Psynergy team has attended 570 incidents, 195 of these cases needed advice only at the point of contact with only 20 of these leading to section 136 detentions.

Psynergy is able to support people to remain in their own home with the right care instead of an unnecessary transfer to an A&E department or a section 136 detention.

The team work seven days a week, operating from 4pm until midnight, which was identified as a key time for mental health callouts through NWAS and the police.

Expert telephone advice helps patients receive care closer to home

Almost 80,000 people avoided an unnecessary trip to hospital last year thanks to enhanced telephone assessment and advice from the ambulance service.

As part of our two-year Transforming Patient Care programme, which began in summer 2017, we focused on introducing initiatives to make sure patients who called 999 but did not need immediate or emergency hospital treatment could receive the right care and support in the community.

This included developing our 24/7 Clinical Hub to have more clinicians – including paramedics, nurses, mental health practitioners and clinical pharmacists - available to offer support to people who need clinical assistance but do not require an ambulance. This is known as ‘hear and treat’.

In 2018/19, we were able to provide telephone advice and support in 38,000 more incidents than the previous year, reducing the number of people taken to hospital in an emergency ambulance.

Despite an overall increase in 999 incidents year-on-year, almost 39,000 fewer patients were taken to hospital by ambulance crews in 2018/19.



EMERGENCY AMBULANCE

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